

Jenkin delays rate-cap orders 'to keep open mind'

By John Carvel, Local Government Correspondent

Mr Patrick Jenkin last night decided to postpone laying the rate-capping orders which he needs to enforce his rate-capping controls on high-spending councils.

The Environment Secretary is insisting that this does not signal any retreat on the policy of using his new statutory powers to limit the local authorities' budgets.

The Government is accepting that no council can challenge Mr Jenkin in the courts for failing to keep an open mind on the merits of its case.

From the Labour council's point of view, however, the de-

lay provides encouragement that Mr Jenkin can be shifted from his chosen course if they stick together behind their threat of non-compliance.

Mr Jenkin was faced yesterday with an embarrassing last-minute approach from the 16 Labour rate-capped councils asking for collective talks on the whole tangled structure of rate-capping, targets, penalties and grants.

They have been joined by nine other Labour authorities, including Liverpool and Manchester, who are not on this year's rate-capping list, but who claim they are being subjected to an insupportable grants squeeze.

Mr Jenkin had planned to lay the first of his rate-capping

orders today to set limits for Merseyside, South Yorkshire, the Greater London Council, and Inner London Education Authority.

These authorities are statutorily obliged to fix their rate precept demands before the lower tier district and borough councils.

Environment Department officials had told Mr Jenkin he should do this today if they were to come into force by the due date of February 15.

It is understood that Mr Jenkin will now seek permission from the Commons' scrutiny committee to telescope parliamentary procedures so that he can delay publishing the orders until the end of

next week at the latest but still meet his target date.

He will send a letter to the councils this morning telling them to come and talk as soon as possible. He will warn them that the collective delegation they plan cannot be a useful way of persuading him to make concessions.

Unless individual councils come to him with figures showing that their rate limits are unduly onerous, they cannot expect him to amend them.

But the councils are refusing individual talks and it is extremely unlikely that a negotiated settlement can be arranged to avoid a confrontation between the Government and the councils in the spring.

The councils are also likely to say that they cannot organise their collective delegation instantly, and that Mr Jenkin should delay his orders beyond next week.

A further complication for Mr Jenkin yesterday was a legal action from Leicester council claiming that he had made a procedural error in setting its provisional rate-cap limit.

The Rates Act says that the Government must first lay its rate support grant report before Parliament and then send out letters to the rate-capped councils.

The Government was obliged to withdraw the rate support grant report which it laid

before the Commons on December 11 because of errors in it. It submitted a new one a week later, but then failed to send out fresh letters to the rate-capped councils.

Mr Justice Woolf will give a reserved judgment today on whether this mistake is sufficient to invalidate the letters. If he says it is, the whole rate-capping timetable could be in tatters.

In a further move yesterday, Mr David Blunkett, leader of the Sheffield and Mrs Margaret Hodge, leader of Islington, had talks with Mr Eddie George, executive director of the Bank of England, about the effect which the rate-capping struggle is having on financial markets.

The rate-capped councils are having to pay between one eighth and one-quarter per cent above the going rate for loans.

They have also been effectively excluded from raising new negotiable bonds because this interest differential prevents them participating in Bank of England arrangements to bring forward batches of bonds at a common rate.

Mr Blunkett impressed on the Bank that a confrontation between the councils and the Government could further affect the authorities' standing with the market, which would cause pressure on the exchange rate and, ultimately, interest rates.

Narrow NEC vote upholds Militant expulsion

By James Naughtie, Political Correspondent

Labour's national executive committee yesterday upheld a decision to expel a Militant Tendency supporter, Mr Bryn Davies, a member of the Rhondda constituency party.

Mr Jim Mortimer, the general secretary, said that there was no dispute that Mr Davies, an unemployed miner, was a Militant supporter. The decision was taken under the party's rules which allow the NEC to expel a member if it is found to be a member of a party which is incompatible with the party's membership. Mr Davies is the 12th Militant supporter to be expelled from the Labour Party.

Before the vote - in which Mr Neil Kinnock, the party leader, was a strong supporter of expulsion - NEC members were told that Militant intended to pursue its legal battle against the party over the expulsion of five members of its editorial board after the decision of the 1983 conference.

Militant supporters lobbied the meeting and succeeded in winning the support of some members of the party who were normally not with Mr Kinnock, including Mr Michael Meacher and Mr Tom Sawyer.

Some leftwingers claim the expulsion of Mr Davies, which was apparently based partly on the evidence of a letter written by him to a Labour constituency secretary, will pave the way for a series of expulsions.

Mr Mortimer, however, was playing down the significance of the move, though rightwingers last night expressed satisfaction at the decision to uphold the expulsion. He said that the party did not attempt to change the wording of the proposed NEC statement of the principles of democratic socialism, which is due to be drawn up at a forthcoming weekend conference, despite strong feelings among some members that the statement should make specific reference to Militant.

The document to be drawn up, which is being presented as evidence of the party's determination to deal with the threat of democratic socialism, will now be general rather than specific in character. Mr Mortimer said: "It will express our belief in parliamentary democracy. It will be an important statement of democratic socialism."

The right's decision not to try to reverse the organisation sub-committee's removal of the mention of Militant from the proposed statement of principle also shows that they did not believe that they could command a majority. It was clear last night that the left intend to fight hard against a statement which can be used in future expulsions.

The NEC also passed, at Mr Kinnock's suggestion, a motion expressing opposition to any attempt by Labour members to fight reselection battles with sitting Labour MPs. There has been criticism of some Euro MPs - notably Mr Leslie Stuckfield - for showing interest in Westminster seats currently held by Labour.

Thatcher's guards at Brighton bomb hotel 'had unclear orders'

By David Hearst

Police guarding the first floor suite where Mrs Thatcher was staying at the Grand Hotel, Brighton, before the IRA bomb exploded, had no clear instructions about when they should admit Mr Roger Birch, Chief Constable of Sussex said yesterday.

This and other gaps in security at the hotel were revealed in a report by Mr John Hoddinott, deputy chief constable of Hampshire. He said Sussex police of criticism about security arrangements.

The report reveals four main areas of weakness in the security operation which was known as Operation Leyton.

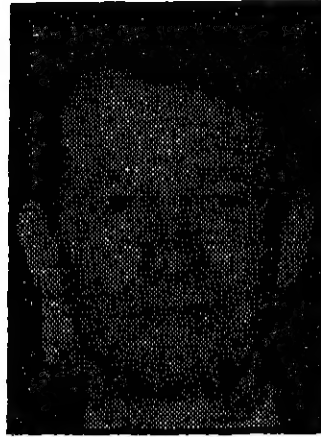
Police forces did not use the same code of security alert so that a general warning by the Metropolitan Police to the branch two days before the explosion was not clear to police in Sussex as it might have been. A standard numerical scale of security alert has since been introduced.

The operational order used by Sussex police to protect key members of the Cabinet was not precise enough so that officers assigned to protect the first floor of the Grand Hotel were distracted from their main task by other police duties. News of the general alert issued by the Met was passed only to senior members of Sussex police.

No searches were made in the hotel beyond the first



John Hoddinott—cleared police



Roger Birch—security compromise

floor. The room of the Home Secretary, Mr Leon Brittan, was not checked because of an overlap of responsibilities among officers who searched the first floor rooms. Each officer thought the other had checked the room.

There were serious weaknesses in liaison between police and staff at the Grand Hotel. Keys for the hotel's 478 rooms were easily available at the switchboard and neither the staff nor men working on hotel alterations were screened. Despite these gaps, "nothing the Sussex police might reasonably have been expected to do against the situation prevailing at the time would have prevented the

explosion," said the report. The bomb went off on October 12.

Mr Birch told Sussex police authority that security was a compromise between the need to hold the conference in a friendly atmosphere and the need to protect conference-goers as well as key members of the Cabinet.

"That compromise might need to be redrawn in future but it does not follow in the planning of Operation Leyton that the compromise was other than professionally arrived at," he said.

Police yesterday refused to release the five volume report compiled by Mr Hoddinott, of which only four copies exist. They claimed that national se-

curity could be affected by its publication.

Members of the police authority were presented with a 25-page summary compiled by Mr Birch. The authority backed him, with the only objection coming from two Liberal councillors who said members had not been given the information they needed to make a judgment about the security arrangements before the conference.

The report said that at the time of the explosion 13 Sussex police officers were deployed around the perimeter of the hotel and conference centre, four plain-clothes officers on duty inside the hotel and members of the Met close protection unit.

Mr Hoddinott found that it would have taken two weeks for 30 search teams to adequately check each hotel room. Mr Birch's summary said: "The issue of sterilisation of the hotel was fundamental to this inquiry for in the view of the investigating officer such a step would have been the only way to have enabled the bomb to have been found."

"Even with this extreme measure Mr Hoddinott's view was that discovery would not have been certain."

Twelve members of the conference required full-time protection. Total security was incompatible with the need to allow easy and informal access to senior ministers.

Leader comment, page 10

NEWS IN BRIEF

Big cinema chains to lose grip

RESTRICTIONS on showing popular films, which operate in favour of big cinema chains, will be suspended during an experiment approved by the Government yesterday.

The Consumer Affairs Minister, Mr Alex Fletcher, approved proposals from the Director General of Fair Trading to implement plans cutting the period of exclusive showing by large chains to four weeks. After this the films would be available to competing cinemas.

The Government had proposed the experiment after the Monopolies Commission called for an end to the system of alignment and barring, under which showings could be restricted.

Mr Fletcher said exhibitors and distributors had agreed in principle to take part. Details would be finalised soon.

Irish protest over arrests

THE Irish Government protested to Britain yesterday over what it said were insensitive arrests under the Prevention of Terrorism Act of two stewards who work on a Dublin to Liverpool car ferry.

The men were detained on Monday and released on Tuesday after questioning about an alleged bomb plot. Mr Peter Barry, Ireland's Foreign Minister, told the Daily that he had conveyed his concern to London over the arrests.

\$340,000 damages for boy, 10

A BOY, aged 10, left with brain damage and severe disability after a difficult birth at a Cambridge maternity hospital, was awarded \$340,000 damages in the High Court yesterday.

Sunil Krishnamurthy is intelligent and knows what he is missing and what he cannot do, the court was told. His parents had sued the hospital alleging medical negligence.

Councils to set up job-creation centre

LABOUR councils are to open a national "centre for local economic initiatives" in Manchester in June.

They say that their aim is to draw together ideas, experience and economic analysis in individual local authorities so to help form a national strategy. Sheffield, Manchester, West Midlands, and the Greater London Council are involved in the project.

Special Branch explains role in defence of realm

By Stephen Cook

The head of Scotland Yard's special branch told the Commons Home Affairs Committee last night that its job is to help the security services defend the realm.

One of the prime responsibilities of the 400 members of the branch was public order, said Deputy Assistant Commissioner Colin Hewett.

The special branch had to assess the likely strength of demonstrations, so that the uniformed branch could make sure it was properly policed.

In London records and files were kept on computers and on paper, he said, but people would not appear on them unless they were trade unionists or supporters of unpopular causes. "We couldn't possibly keep files on all peace movement supporters, for example," he said.

He declined to say how many files were kept, as to do so would be against the public interest because the information would be of interest to terrorists. But he agreed to consider giving the committee the answer later.

Mr Maurice Buck, Chief Constable of Northumbria, told the committee that his force had only seven special branch men out of 1,000 officers, yet they maintained between 400 and 500 files.

Mr Kenneth Oxford, Chief Constable of Oxfordshire, said that his special branch had 178 officers out of 4,700, and they

kept "several hundreds, probably thousands" of records. Mr Hewett agreed that there had been examples of special branch information leaking out to unauthorised people. These were rare, but were regretted. Files were regularly weeded, sometimes ruthlessly, and his computer had fewer names on it than two years ago.

He said it was nonsense to suggest that special branch officers carried out burglaries on behalf of the security services. Politically-biased officers were rejected as unsuitable and training was rigorous. People tended to stay with the special branch in London longer than elsewhere because they often had special knowledge or skill in languages.

Mr Oxford told the committee that he thought the case of Mrs Madeleine Haigh, a West Midlands woman who was visited by special branch after writing to a newspaper to oppose cruise missiles, involved an over-zealous officer. He added: "There are a lot of over-zealous police officers."

All three senior officers said they hoped that the committee's inquiry into special branch could help dispel many myths about it. "We can't give a definitive biography of special branch, but we can try to re-polish their image," said Mr Oxford. "They are involved in difficult and sometimes dangerous work which has to go on without too much publicity."

Academic freedom 'must be protected by rules'

By Andrew Moncur

The University Grants Committee, faced with Sir Keith Joseph's aim to end the "job for life" security of lectureship, has come out with a stout defence of academic freedom.

But it has also stated that it does not justify absolute protection of all university posts in all circumstances. The UGC, in its detailed response to the government's proposals on the future of academic tenure, called yesterday for wide public debate before any decisions are taken on redefining the statutes of individual universities.

The committee is taking a less hawkish line than it did

immediately after Sir Keith announced last May that he was prepared to legislate, if necessary, to limit academic tenure for future appointments.

The Education Secretary aims to give universities the power to sack academic staff for reasons of redundancy or financial exigency. In August, he announced that he would press ahead with legislation.

The UGC stressed yesterday that it was "vitally concerned" to safeguard the academic freedom of universities and individual staff. Sir Keith has said that redundancy powers would not be used to restrict academic freedom.

Skillcentre dilemma over cash and role

By Sarah Boseley

Proposals to close some Skillcentres to make the network pay its way are incompatible with the agency's social aim of employment to the unemployed, the chairman of Commons select committee on employment said yesterday.

Mr Ron Leighton, Labour MP and chairman of the committee, told Mr Geoffrey Holland, director of the Manpower Services Commission, which runs Skillcentres, "There is really an incompatibility of aim."

"Either you can let market forces rule and cut out more Skillcentres or say the Skillcentre agencies have to play a social role. There is an incompatibility between having on one hand a financial target and on the other hand a national aim."

Mr Holland faced questions on the report the MPs had commissioned from Mr Andrew Lakeman of the London Business School, which stated that if 29 of the 87 Skillcentres across the country were closed "the future of virtually the whole Skillcentre network is uncertain." The commission is due to make a decision today.

Mr Holland made it clear that the emphasis of the network was moving towards training and retraining these already in employment to meet the needs of new technology. It is proposed that 300 "mobile instructors" be recruited and that employers are induced to play a greater part in training than before.

Mr Ken Eastham, a member of the select committee, asked how mobile instructors were going to train the unemployed when the only premises available were employers' factories.

Mr Ian Johnstone, chief executive of the training division of the Manpower Services Commission, replied that the instructors might go to community programmes to conduct on-site training. Mr Holland added that employers would be encouraged to recruit and train young people.

This year the 87 Skillcentres will provide training for about 85,000 people at a cost of £12 million.



The Duchess of Kent leaving the Harland and Wolff shipyard

THE Duchess of Kent braved driving snow in Northern Ireland yesterday to meet shipbuilders, firemen and front-line policemen. Plans for a helicopter flight were abandoned because of a blizzard, but she kept all her appointments in the Belfast area.

Hundreds of police and troops were on duty for the visit, which passed off without trouble. The duchess spoke of her hopes for an end to the violence.

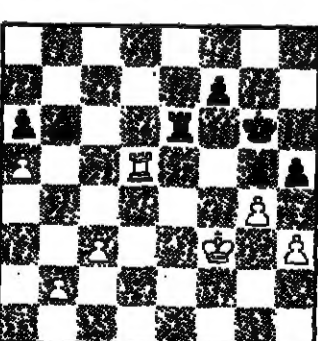
Her main engagement was at Belfast shipyard where she named a refrigerated vessel, English Star, the first of four being built by Harland and Wolff for the

Blue Star Line of London. She named the vessel in front of the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, politicians, industrialists, and shipyard workers.

At Antrim RUC station, she was introduced to a chief constable, Sir John Hermon.

Princess Anne is to resume her interrupted tour of India as president of the Save the Children Fund next month, Buckingham Palace announced yesterday. She was forced to eat short her tour after three days last October when the Indian prime minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, was assassinated.

Karpov in deadlock



The month-long deadlock in the Moscow world chess series continued when Karpov and Kasparov agreed their 13th successive draw. They reached a level endgame after 36 moves.

Britain's 19-year-old champion Nigel Short took a 3-1 lead over the reigning US champion Lev Alburt in an eight-game chess match at Foxboro, Massachusetts.

White: Karpov, Black: Kasparov. Sicilian Defence (B5th game). 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 d6 6. e5 dxe5 7. f4 exf4 8. g3 h5 9. Bg2 h4 10. Qd2 Qc7 11. Bf3 Qd7 12. Qe2 Qe7 13. Qd2 Qd7 14. Qe2 Qe7 15. Qd2 Qd7 16. Qe2 Qe7 17. Qd2 Qd7 18. Qe2 Qe7 19. Qd2 Qd7 20. Qe2 Qe7 21. Qd2 Qd7 22. Qe2 Qe7 23. Qd2 Qd7 24. Qe2 Qe7 25. Qd2 Qd7 26. Qe2 Qe7 27. Qd2 Qd7 28. Qe2 Qe7 29. Qd2 Qd7 30. Qe2 Qe7 31. Qd2 Qd7 32. Qe2 Qe7 33. Qd2 Qd7 34. Qe2 Qe7 35. Qd2 Qd7 36. Qe2 Qe7

Nuclear scientist to give inquest evidence

By Gareth Parry

For the first time a nuclear physicist is to give medical evidence at an inquest into the death of a British nuclear test veteran.

The scientist, who does not work for the government, is therefore free from official constraints, is now collating his report of the analysis he conducted of tissues taken from Mr Kenneth Measures, 1983, was opened and adjourned to await expert medical evidence. Mr Derrick Peppercorn, the West Cornwall coroner, said yesterday that he had ordered an inquest to discover if the complications which contributed to Mr Measures' death were related to his presence at Christmas Island.

An inquest such as this would have to be held with a full jury. It would not be in the public interest for me to hear this case alone.

A royal commission into British nuclear tests in Australia is sitting in London, hearing evidence from more than 25 expert witnesses and veterans to examine the safety of the tests.

BBC wins Chinese deal

By Dennis Barker

The BBC has beaten the Americans and the Australians in announcing a co-production deal with China Central Television to produce a series of 20 programmes on science, technology, and medicine.

The series, for Chinese-speaking students, will be made in both Mandarin, the main language of the Chinese mainland, and Cantonese, the language of the Hong Kong Chinese, and will be screened in both China and Hong Kong in 1986.

Kathy Flower, who made an earlier series, English By Television, for the Chinese, will be

featured in the new series, which will receive a £600,000 grant from the Hong Kong-based Croucher Foundation, an educational foundation set up by a former British businessman, Mr Noel Croucher.

"This is an impressive coup for the BBC External Services and for Britain," said Mr Alan Kent, managing director of BBC External Broadcasting. Miss Barbara Goldsmith, head of English by Radio and Television, said: "Many countries have been trying to emulate our cultural diplomacy in China, but they have not been able to replace the BBC and its reputation in Chinese eyes."

OBITUARY Guardian journalist

MR STANLEY BAKER, OBE, former agricultural correspondent of the Guardian, has died at Hordham in Sussex, near his home. Mr Baker worked for the Guardian for over three decades before retiring in the 1960s.

A great exponent of greater efficiency in agriculture, he took on the job in the 1950s after working as chief sub-editor in the London office of the then Manchester Guardian.

Literary chef

JAMES BEARD, the author and gastronome who moulded America's culinary tastes for 40 years, died in New York, aged 81.

Known to millions for his bold pats and hefty girth, he was the author of two dozen books, including The Book of Cooks, American Cooking, and Beard on Bread. He ran a cooking school in New York and wrote a weekly syndicated column.

'Pop' historian

SIR ARTHUR BRYANT, a pop historian whose 1961 book, accounts of Britain's greatest stars stirred patriotic hearts for decades, has died at the age of 55, in Salisbury, Wiltshire, after a long illness.

Killed by cold

Mrs Kathleen Russell, aged 96, who turned off the heating in her Tisbury, Wiltshire, sheltered cottage last to save money, later died from hypothermia and heart failure in hospital a post-mortem examination established yesterday.



POINTS OF DISORDER: Terry Hudson (left), a working miners' leader, confronting John Richardson, who is on strike, at an abortive meeting yesterday to explain plans for a split from the National Union of Mineworkers in Yorkshire. Pictures by Don McPhee

Working miners drift back from schism

By Malcolm Pithers
STRIKING and working miners, a Tory MP and bewildered members of the media spent an hour yesterday watching the collapse of an attempt to form a breakaway movement from the NUM in Yorkshire.

The working miners had called a press conference to explain their plans but when only a handful of men arrived at a working men's club in Normanton, near Wakefield, they decided to put the matter in abeyance. One organiser said that men who had arrived had decided to "scarper" after seeing the press.

Presence of the press did not have helped but about 10 miners were seen leaving the club.

Striking miners who had heard on radio about the

meeting turned up to see what support there was and to join the questioning. After an hour it was clear that support was not forthcoming.

The strikers, at first slightly apprehensive and a little angry, realised that they had an opportunity to state their case to working miners.

At one point one of the men who had helped organise the conference, Mr Terry Hudson, chairman of north Yorkshire working miners' consultative committee, rose to walk out saying that he wanted no part of any breakaway from the National Union of Mineworkers.

Mr Hudson, who is well liked by Yorkshire miners, said his only concern was to look after the needs of men returning to work. Two other



Howard Wadsworth — strikers' back soon

surface welder at the same pit, made it clear that they wanted a breakaway.

Mr Pointon said that the meeting had been called to form a committee in case Nottinghamshire men were expelled from the union. Many striking miners tried to point out that the NUM did not want to expel Nottinghamshire, which had sought rule changes.

Mr Howard Wadsworth, the NUM branch delegate at Kellingley colliery, a forceful, well-respected miner, told Mr Moore and Mr Pointon that they did not know what they were talking about and that they were being used. Without the NUM they would have no future.

Mr Wadsworth, who believed all miners would be back at work soon, said that

the NUM and the National Coal Board both wanted a settlement but "Mrs Thatcher wants to grind Scargill and the NUM into the dust."

Mr Spencer Batiste, Conservative MP for Elmet and Yorkshire trade union movement, looked on benignly. He had said he was at the press conference to look into intimidation against working miners, not to persuade men to end the strike.

One striking miner, Mr John Richardson, said that 37 men had gone back to work at his pit, the Prince of Wales, near Pontefract.

"Those lads have given everything, everything. But they have had to go back. They are not scabs to me because they have given all and more."

FO rebuked for laxity before Libyan offer

Diplomatic bags should be scanned, say MPs

By Patrick Kealey, Diplomatic Correspondent

Diplomatic bags should be electronically scanned if there are fears that they could be a security risk, the Commons foreign affairs committee said yesterday.

The select committee made its recommendation in a report of an inquiry which followed the shooting of WPC Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan People's Bureau in London last spring, and the later attempt to smuggle a Nigerian exile, Dr Umaru Dikko, out of England in a crate marked as diplomatic baggage.

The committee suggested proposals aimed at reducing the abuse of diplomatic immunities and privileges, and rebuked the Foreign Office for its handling of the Libyan mission in London in the three months before WPC Fletcher died.

In its 94-page report, the committee said that from the time the Revolutionary Committee of Libyan Students took over the embassy building in St James's Square in September 1979 to the day last April on which the policeman was killed by bullets fired from a window, Whitehall turned a blind eye to irregular goings-on at the embassy.

The committee noted that other European governments were confronted with Colonel Gaddafi's strategy of turning embassies into People's Bureaux and refusing to designate anyone as ambassador or charge d'affaires.

Britain and her EEC partners decided to try to live with the new, deliberately obscure system. They resolved to direct their main dealings to the Libyan foreign ministry in Tripoli, renamed the Foreign Liaison Bureau, and to by-pass



Sir Anthony Kershaw: "obliging flexibility"

the Libyan embassies in their own capitals.

The committee, chaired by a former Tory minister, Sir Anthony Kershaw, MP, observed that this obliging flexibility by the European countries was misconstrued by the Libyans, and led to further rule-bending and bomb outrages.

The report's main recommendation said: "The test will be whether a firmer policy is adopted throughout the whole range of diplomatic abuses. The committee considers that such a firmer policy is the only effective weapon that the British Government possesses."

Referring to the arguments presented in evidence by lawyers, Foreign Office officials, and expert witnesses about the vulnerable position of British Embassy staff in Libya, the report rejected the idea of implicit blackmail, and said: "Britain will have to accept the often unjustified retaliatory action that will follow such a firmer policy—as in the

cases of Nigeria and Libya—as a price worth paying."

The committee sets out nine other key points:

● The scanning of diplomatic bags by electronic means is lawful, and should be used judiciously.

● Traffic in such bags should be monitored, listed, and graphed, at least in the case of hostile embassies.

● Incoming diplomats should be vetted by means of individual biographies. None is required at present, except for heads of missions.

● Caution on the numbers of staff at missions should be imposed as soon as they are suspected of breaking the rules of diplomatic behaviour.

● There should be an immediate crackdown on irregularities, rather than giving an embassy the benefit of the doubt.

● The need to save human life overrides the text of the Vienna Convention of 1961, and all embassies should be so notified.

● Diplomatic missions cannot be insulated from the peaceful demonstrations that are normal in Britain, though the Libyans demanded this the night before the St James's Square shooting.

● Liaison between the FO and Home Office in such matters has proved inadequate, and should be urgently revised.

● The Vienna Convention, signed by 143 nations, is virtually unenforceable, despite ministerial hints to the Commons last year that Britain would seek changes. Amendments would not be in Britain's national interest.

The Abuse of Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges, Stationery Office, £3.50. Leader comment, page 10

Protests at woman's inquiry 'ordeal'

From Joe Joyce in Dublin

Neighbours and friends of Miss Joanne Hayes, the woman at the centre of the controversial Irish inquiry into police conduct, yesterday picked the tribunal amid a chorus of protests over her treatment by lawyers.

Some 40 people paraded outside Tralee town hall in County Kerry, where the inquiry is being held.

Miss Hayes, aged 35, was accused last year of the murder of a newborn baby which forensic evidence suggests she could not have committed. The charge was later dropped.

Miss Hayes broke down under the relentless questioning about her affair with a married man and the birth of her child, which she delivered by herself while standing in a field near her home last April. The baby died and she hid its body in a pool of water on the family farm.

Two weeks later, police investigating the discovery of a stabbed infant on a beach 40 miles away interrogated her and her family. She, her two brothers, sister and aunt signed statements confessing to the stabbing.

The inquiry, under a high court judge, Mr Justice Kevin Lynch, is required to find out how the charges against Miss Hayes and her family came about and were later dropped.

It is also examining the family's claims that they were pressured into making false confessions.

The senior policemen involved say that they gave birth to twins by two different fathers and that the alleged confessions were voluntary.

Miss Hayes has denied that she gave birth to twins or that she had sex with two men within 48 hours of each other.

A Daily committee on women's affairs this week asked the Justice Minister, Mr Michael Noonan, who ordered the public inquiry — to intervene because of the "insensitive" questioning. Members complained of "mental torture" and of harrowing and horrible cross examination.

Suicide by prisoner with 17 years to go

by Tom Sharratt

A prisoner serving a life sentence of murder was found hanging in his cell four days after being told that his name would not go to a local parole review committee for another 17 years, an inquest at Wakefield heard yesterday.

The jury was told that in a letter to his sister, Tony Taylor, aged 34, from Birkenhead, who was gaoled in 1980, wrote: "I just can't believe it or understand it. I am to serve a minimum of 20 years."

Later in the same letter he wrote: "Hanging. I would much rather face. I would walk to the gallows with a smile on my face rather than face what lies ahead." He prayed, he told his sister, for a better attack.

The Home Office decision on Taylor's case was given to him on November 1. On the evening of November 5 Taylor, who was the sole occupant of his cell at Wakefield Prison, was found hanging by a length of twine from the bars of the window. Another piece of cord was round his neck, and a plastic bag was over his head.

Mr Peter Annakin, a prison officer who was on duty when Taylor's body was found by another inmate, said that prisoners were not allowed to have rope, but they had ways of obtaining things. Earlier in the day, Taylor had been in the prison workshops.

He was also concerned about his proposed transfer to Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, because of the difficulty for his family in visiting him there.

Asked by Mr Gill if he was satisfied that no one else was involved in the death, Mr Atherton replied: "I am quite satisfied."

Mr Edward Fitzgerald, for Mr Taylor's family, told the inquest that in October 1983 there had been a change in Home Office policy, on parole reviews.

Mr Atherton agreed with Mr Fitzgerald that under the new policy certain categories of prisoners were likely to serve a minimum of 20 years.

The inquest continues today.

Life savings bill for job

A 64-year-old woman handed over almost all her life savings when she paid a man £11,350 to relay a drive, tidy up paths, lop trees, and demolish two sheds, Oxford Crown Court was told yesterday.

Mr Richard Jenkins, prosecuting, said that Michael Joyce, aged 26, of Slade Park, Oxford, and another man turned up in a van at Miss Millicent Powell's bungalow at Grove, Oxon, in February 1983 offering their services.

She agreed to the work without asking for an estimate, and when it was completed by Joyce and other men in two mornings she was given a bill for £3,500 labour and £2,000 for materials.

Mr Jenkins said: "She told the men this was almost all her savings, but they took no notice." Later she stopped one cheque for £8,000. Then she had to pay £730 to have Joyce's work put right.

Mr Jenkins said a builder has estimated that Joyce's



Millicent Powell — sought no estimate

work should have cost £624. Joyce denies obtaining £11,350 by deception. His counsel, Mr Nicholas Brown, said Joyce was a victim of mistaken identity. He went on: "The defendant will tell you that it was not him but his uncle ... The case continues."

THE BEST FOR LESS

Boots Natural Oatmeal Toilet Soap 4 pack 284g

39p

Harmony Hair Colourant

81p

Oil of Ulay 75ml

£1.19

Sure Anti-perspirant Deodorant 143ml

89p

Empathy Shampoo 200ml

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£1.49

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Bishops take fish off menu for penance

By Martyn Halsall,
Churches Correspondent

EATING fish on Fridays as a penance is finally abolished today for Roman Catholics in England and Wales.

Options now approved by the bishops include abstinence from smoking and drinking, making "special efforts" in prayer and Mass attendance, helping the poor, sick and elderly and giving money saved by fasting to the hungry.

The church never meant the weekly commemoration of the Crucifixion to involve eating fish, the bishops say in a statement. "Abstinence always meant the giving up of meat rather than the eating of fish as a substitute."

The ruling aims to bring personal practice in line with the Code of Canon Law published in 1983.

The English bishops decided in 1966 that the traditional abstinence from meat on Fridays should be placed among a number of options, after a general directive from Pope Paul VI.

The bishops' statement says repeated and deliberate avoidance of penance on Fridays is sinful. The church's law on abstinence applies to everyone over 14 and the law of fasting to those between 18 and 60 among the 42 million Catholics in England and Wales.

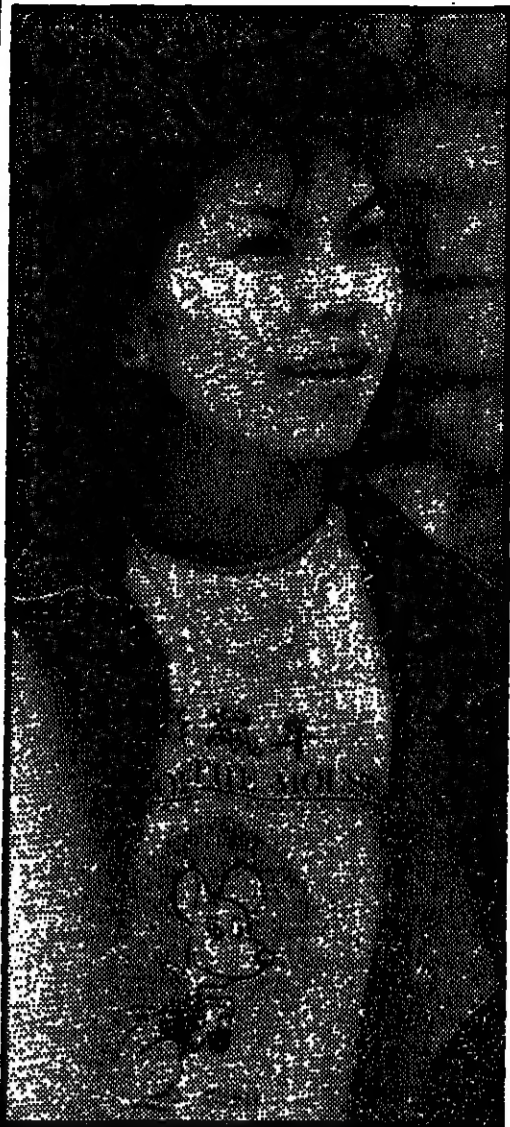
Fasting is defined as a considerable reduction in food consumed; abstinence as the giving up of food, drink or amusements. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are particularly prescribed as days of fasting and abstinence.

The faithful are to decide which form of weekly penance to adopt.

Spending cuts

In yesterday's Guardian it was reported that local education authorities faced spending reductions of 3.4 per cent between 1985-86 and 1986-87 and 2.5 per cent in 1987-88. These figures should have read 3 per cent and 2 per cent.

Breaking away from the takeaway



Martin Wainwright on officialdom's inquiry into Britain's discreet Chinese

Braving an ancient Chinese proverb — avoid entering the door of a government office as you would avoid entering hell — a committee of MPs has called for closer links between Britain's Chinese community.

The first major survey of the 100,000 Chinese the country's third largest ethnic community after West Indians and citizens from the Indian sub-continent suggests that problems exist behind a discreet, self-contained facade.

Traditional unwillingness to complain to the authorities has led to a very low take-up of social services. One elderly Chinese discovered by the committee had led a hand-to-mouth existence without any state help for 14 years after being disabled in a car accident.

The MPs also found that the introspection of the community meant that the Chinese were unlikely to have any interest in local authority services like lunch clubs or day centres.

Mr John Wheeler, Conservative MP for Paddington and chairman of the Commons home affairs sub-committee which carried out the survey, said that many younger Chinese were anxious to escape from the community's isolation. They were looking for jobs outside catering, which is thought to involve some 90 per cent of British Chinese.

"We may be seeing a break-away from the takeaway," he said. The nature of Chinese

catering with its unsocial hours and the scattering of the community to avoid too much competition between restaurants, conspired to increase the community's isolation.

The MPs agreed on 77 recommendations to publicise government services, increase specific Chinese facilities and cross the language barrier. Most would be the responsibility of local authorities and none would be particularly expensive.

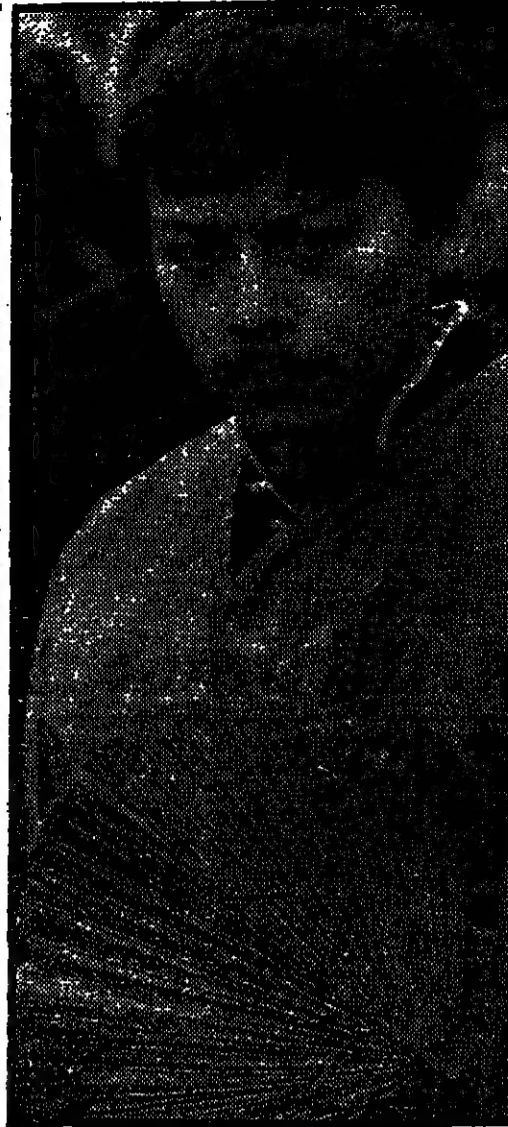
They also rejected the traditional image of the Chinese as a community living in the shadow of organised crime. The report says that there are no "triad" secret societies in Britain and that the word "triad" should be dropped from the police's vocabulary.

The survey deliberately excluded all matters relating to the future of Hong Kong, arguing that these were the concern of the Commons foreign affairs committee.

More than 90 per cent of British Chinese are from Hong Kong, and many still use the colony for medical treatment and their children's education. They feel that the end of the colonial link in 1997 will do more to encourage them to participate in British public life than any other measure.

The Chinese Community in Britain, House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, HMSO £6.90.

Left: Modern Chinese image in London Right: Traditional dress in Liverpool



'Overt' questions for GCHQ staff

By Richard Norton-Taylor

GCHQ staff, facing their five-yearly positive vetting interviews, are being asked overtly political questions, including what they think about Mrs Thatcher's performance as Prime Minister.

They are also being asked about their attitudes towards the miners' strike, Mr Arthur Scargill, Mr Tony Benn, the Greenham Common women and the situation in Northern Ireland.

Mr Dennis Mitchell, a senior GCHQ official who has applied for early retirement, said recently that the union ban there had divided the workforce and could lead to staff being "in a sense, political appointees." The workforce had traditionally reflected a cross-section of opinion, but that could change because of the management attitude and with new recruits being forced to "toe the line," he said.

One Civil Service union leader yesterday asked whether staff would be questioned about different political leaders if there was a change in government.

Until now, civil servants in

posts subject to positive vetting have been asked whether they have been members of, or in sympathy with, Communist, Trotskyist or Fascist organisations, or a group which practised "unconstitutional activities in pursuit of its political objectives."

The Security Commission said in a 1982 report that character defects rather than disloyalty for ideological reasons or subversive tendencies had been the cause of all known spy cases over the previous 20 years. (However, it said that relations with a "subversive organisation" as well as character defects should become a criterion for blocking positive vetting clearance.)

The disclosure that the questioning is being broadened comes at a time when the First Division Association, which represents about 8,000 senior civil servants, is expressing concern about evidence that the Government is extending the system elsewhere in Whitehall to cover pressure groups, including the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The association has asked the Government for talks about how it operates the vetting system.

Nuclear safety approval illegal, group claims

By Roger Milne

The Nuclear Installation Inspectorate is taking legal advice over a claim that the reactor safety checks it has carried out since 1974 have been done illegally.

The claim was made by Friends of the Earth during its closing submission to the public inquiry into the Central Electricity Generating Board's proposal to build a pressurised water reactor (PWR) nuclear power station at Sizewell on the Suffolk coast.

Mr John Howell, counsel for the environmental pressure group, said that the inspectorate was wrong to base its safety assessment of the PWR reactor on the requirements of the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act, rather than the more stringent 1965 Nuclear Installations Act.

During an eight-hour final statement, Mr Howell said the inspectorate has "adopted fundamental principles based upon considerations of reasonable practicability which have no place in the standard of nuclear safety required by Parliament."

"In so far as the decision to grant a site licence was based, or had regard to such principles, it would be null and void."

For the same reasons Friends of the Earth believes that all nuclear site licences granted by the inspectorate since 1974 are invalid.

Mr Howell also claimed that the then Energy Secretary, Mr David Howell, had misled MPs in 1983 by saying that the Sizewell B inquiry would be able to consider in detail the safety of the PWR project.

Counsel claimed that when Mr David Howell said this he was already aware that his promise to a Commons select committee — that the inquiry would not start until the inspectorate had enough information to give the PWR reactor full safety clearance — could not be fulfilled.

Mr John Howell said this statement was misleading since the inquiry had heard that only three quarters of the safety issues between the inspectorate and the board have been resolved — or are close to solution.

Inquiry into eye trouble cases near waste plant

By Paul Hoyland

An eye specialist is to conduct an inquiry into the alleged incidence of eye deformities in children living near the Re-Chem waste disposal plant at Pontypool, South Wales.

Mr Alec Karsseras, consultant ophthalmologist at St Woolos Hospital, Newport, Gwent, has accepted Re-Chem's invitation to carry out an independent investigation. But parents may not cooperate, as he has been appointed by the company.

Pressure groups have been campaigning to stop Re-Chem disposing of the chemical PCB, which if incinerated at too low

a temperature can produce dioxin, which has been linked to cancer.

Cases of children with serious eye deformities have been reported at Pontypool and at Bonnybridge, Scotland, where Re-Chem's other plant was closed last year on economic grounds.

Mr Malcolm Lee, Re-Chem's managing director, said yesterday that Mr Karsseras had been asked to act as an independent authority because the company believed that publicity about allegations of deformities had been misleading, and had caused unjustified concern in the Pontypool area.

Teachers pass computer test

By Peter Large,
Technology Correspondent

Around 30 per cent of Britain's 500,000 school teachers have become officially "computer literate" over the past four years after taking the basic courses organised by the government's Microelectronics Education Programme (MEP).

Nearly 14 per cent have also taken week-long "familiarisation" courses covering more specific areas, such as the effect of microelectronics on working life.

Mr Richard Fothergill, director of MEP, gave the summary of the programme's four-year progress at the opening of a computers-in-education exhibition in London yesterday. The programme has an

annual budget of about £4.5 million, but is due to end in March, 1986.

Earlier yesterday, the Education Department published a summary of a survey of computers in secondary schools, made last summer.

It shows that virtually every school now has at least one microcomputer with an average of 8.7 computers per school. The figure is higher than any other nation has achieved, but it still means only one computer between about every 148 pupils.

The survey also shows that computers are still mainly used in narrow ways. Only 8 per cent of courses in the humanities and geography use computers and even in busi-

ness and economics the score is only 20 per cent. Yet 65 per cent of science classes use computers and 58 per cent of mathematics classes.

Opening the exhibition yesterday, Mr Bob Dunn, the junior education minister, announced that MEP is moving up to the "16-bit" world.

A common measure of computer power is the number of bits of basic information a machine can handle simultaneously. Most computers in schools are only eight-bit.

Mr Fothergill said that MEP, which has spent about £5 million on software development, is inviting bids for its first 16-bit software contract.

THE P.M. AT 9.30 P.M.

Live on Thames Television's TV Eye tonight, the Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher talks to Sir Alastair Burnet, at a time when she's facing possibly some of the greatest difficulties of her second term in office.

Has she learnt a lesson from the fall of the pound? What do her plans for cutting

unemployment really add up to? Is she prepared to see the miners' strike go on and on? And does she think nuclear disarmament is likely to fail over the crucial 'star wars' issue?

The Prime Minister discusses these and other issues with Sir Alastair Burnet on tonight's edition of TV Eye, 9.30pm on ITV.

THE MARGARET THATCHER INTERVIEW

TV EYE 9.30 tonight on ITV



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Bullet victim: Pedro Garcia, aged 51, is helped away by friends after being shot in the right eye by a police rubber bullet in Vitoria, northern Spain, yesterday. He was one of 500 jobless workers demonstrating outside the Basque parliament building where a meeting to elect a nationalist regional premier was being held. Police also used teargas against the crowd

Decision seen as goodwill gesture before Stockholm talks

Nato drafts declaration to emphasise non-aggression

By Hella Pick

The Nato Allies are preparing a draft declaration on the non-use of force, ready for negotiation at the European Conference on Confidence-Building and Disarmament in Stockholm, as a gesture of goodwill towards the Soviet Union.

The decision to support such a declaration is part of a distinct effort all round, including the Warsaw Pact countries, to reach at least an interim agreement at the Stockholm conference in time for the tenth anniversary of the Helsinki Declaration at the end of July.

Nato support for a formal affirmation of the non-use of force is in response to long-standing Warsaw Pact proposals for non-aggression treaties between the 35 signatory countries of the Helsinki Declaration—all of Europe—with the exception of Albania—together with the US and Canada.

Until now, the West has argued that the United Nations

Charter and the Helsinki Declaration contain adequate commitments to the non-use of force, and that there was little point in further "declarations" gestures at Stockholm.

However, when the Stockholm conference reconvenes on January 29, the Nato countries intend to inform the other delegations that they are now prepared to modify their stand.

They will insist on a wider package, with the Warsaw Pact countries willing to accept an improvement in "military transparency" involving an exchange of information on troop movements and military manoeuvres in Europe, designed to increase confidence and to guard against accidental war.

Soviet diplomats have already indicated that they are interested in a compromise, and hope that an interim agreement can be reached this summer. Similar optimism was expressed this week by the leader of the US delegation in Stockholm, Mr James Goodby.

Nato diplomats are meeting in Brussels today and tomorrow to prepare a common brief for Stockholm. While there is now agreement on a declaration on the non-use of force, they want to stop short of formal non-aggression treaties.

They also continue to reject Warsaw Pact proposals, also

Obsolete weapons, page 19

tabled in Stockholm, for a declaration on the non-first use of nuclear weapons, or for a nuclear freeze.

The Stockholm Conference, an offshoot of the Helsinki Declaration Review Conference, has been in stalemate since it began just over a year ago.

The present optimistic mood and the interest in compromise at Stockholm is widely considered a reflection of the successful outcome of the Geneva super-power meeting.

President Chernenko yesterday reinforced the Soviet commitment to the tough arms negotiations that lie ahead with the US. In a written message to a Soviet Peace Movement Conference in Moscow, he promised a "business-like and constructive" approach to the negotiations. "Let us hope," he added, "that the US will also adopt an upright and responsible approach."

This is the first time that President Chernenko's name has been directly associated with the Geneva agreement to negotiate with the US.

Officials in Moscow acknowledged that Mr Chernenko is ill and that last week's Warsaw Pact summit was called off because he would have been unable to attend.

Despite unconfirmed reports that the Soviet leader had to be treated on a respirator machine last week, the Kremlin is emphasising that his health gives no cause for concern.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Walk-out by Kanak leader

JEAN-Marie Tjibaou, the leader of the Kanak independence movement in New Caledonia, walked out of the National Assembly in Paris last night when the right-wing Opposition objected to his presence during a debate on extending a state of emergency in the territory. The Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front declared a provisional government in New Caledonia in December 1—Reuter.

Maori stand

A MAORI rugby union group supporting this year's scheduled tour of South Africa by the New Zealand All Blacks team, the central districts Maori rugby council, representing Maori players in the lower half of the North Island said sporting contact was an important means of fostering understanding between people.—Reuter.

Britons deported

SAUDI ARABIA has deported 11 Britons arrested at a new year party for drinking alcohol. The Foreign Office said in London yesterday. A spokesman said the Britons were taken from prison and put on a flight from Jeddah to London on Tuesday.—Reuter.

Swiss poll

SWISS citizens will be asked to decide a referendum in March next year whether the country should join the UN, a government spokesman said in Bern yesterday. Switzerland is already represented in key UN subsidiary bodies.

Singapore post

HAMILTON Whyte, aged 57, the British Ambassador withdrawn from Nigeria in the diplomatic dispute about the kidnapping of Umaru Dikko last year was named yesterday to take over Britain's mission in Singapore. He succeeds Sir Peter Moon, who has been appointed ambassador to Kuwait.—Reuter.

Plane threat

GUERRILLAS in Southern Sudan yesterday stepped up pressure on the beleaguered town of Juba, by threatening to shoot down civilian flights, writes Nick Cater. Ambushes by the Sudan People's Liberation Army have halted all road and river traffic to and from the town.

Election date

THE Zimbabwean Prime Minister, Mr Mugabe, said yesterday that his country's first post-independence general elections would be held in March, but he did not name a precise date.—Reuter.

Polish 'spy'

FRANCE has asked Poland to recall an embassy attaché who was collecting information on the support for the banned Solidarity trade union. Stanislaw Janczak, aged 33, was a high-ranking Polish intelligence officer.—Reuter.

Baker vote

THE Senate Finance Committee yesterday unanimously endorsed the White House Chief of Staff, Mr James Baker, as the new US Treasury Secretary.—Reuter.

Nicaraguans blame US for peace impasse

From Tony Jenkins in Managua

President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua has accused the US of trying to undermine last national efforts to find a negotiated settlement in Central America.

The newly inaugurated President said the US Administration was putting pressure on Costa Rica, Honduras, and El Salvador to pull out of next month's talks in Panama, at which ministers were due to complete a regional peace treaty.

Mr Reagan is knocking down every instance where one could look for a negotiated solution," Mr Ortega said. "I think the US felt pressured, that Nicaragua's very reasonable position was gathering support and that Latin American countries were urging him to back Contadora. By abandoning the talks he wanted to present Congress with a fait accompli."

Last week, Costa Rica announced that it would not attend the next Contadora meeting on Feb 14 after allegations that Sandinista police trespassed on its embassy's property here to arrest an army deserter seeking asylum.

The Sandinistas rejected the accusation but since the Costa Rican decision, Honduras and El Salvador announced that they would follow suit "in solidarity with Costa Rica."

Mr Ortega believed this was a flimsy excuse for abandoning the peace talks. "We have complaints 1,000 times worse. More than 7,000 of our people have been killed. It doesn't stop us talking. There isn't the pretence here of an adequate excuse for a pull-out."

Mr Ortega said that a peaceful solution in Central America, would have to involve direct talks between Managua and Washington. "Our relations have to be normalised, but the concessions they are demanding means the liquidation of the Nicaraguan revolution."

What he called Nicaragua's reasonable position was reflected in a series of concessions made after the elections in November. They culminated in an unconditional amnesty offer to counter-revolutionary leaders in his inaugural speech.

The Sandinistas also started to negotiate with the Catholic Church hierarchy and with Mr

Brooklyn Rivera, a leader of Miskito Indian rebels fighting on the Atlantic coast.

Government is now prepared to grant autonomy to the different ethnic groups on the coast, but when the Sandinista team went to Colombia last weekend, prepared to sign a ceasefire, Mr Rivera did not turn up.

Mr Rivera was pressured by the United States," Mr Ortega asserted. "The evidence is that he is now being expelled from his organisation for having met us."

Mr Ortega believed that the US Administration was convinced that CIA-led counter-revolutionary forces could overthrow the Sandinistas. "Why negotiate with us when they think we will fail?"

"Our only alternative at the moment is to hit their contra forces and we are hitting them. They haven't been able to stop the coffee harvest and we have driven some groups back to their bases in Honduras."

Mr Ortega admitted that the battered economy was undermining Sandinista support. "Of course, when there is an economic crisis, there is discontent."

"The elections for us were a trial by fire. What other party in Central America could have won 67 per cent of the vote in similar conditions?"

"What other government can give guns to 200,000 militiamen?" he asked. "We have the positive power in the hands of the people."

The main opposition party boycotted the November elections.



President Ortega: Peace talks undermined

Battle ahead over farm support cuts

From Michael White in Washington

The Administration's plan for reform of the \$30 billion farm support system is running into increasing criticism with every detail of the changes which emerges from the Department of Agriculture.

European diplomatic observers here privately hope that things will stay this way, so that powerful farm interests in Congress and the country will block legislation, which would lower world prices and so affect Common Market farm costs and exports.

In an interview yesterday, the Agriculture Secretary, Mr John Block, again repudiated the interventionist structure designed during the New Deal 50 years ago, when 25 per cent of Americans still lived on farms—only 3 per cent do so today—and farm incomes were only 40 per cent of urban ones, which they now roughly equal.

Urging "revolutionary" changes which would seek to create a safety net of supports based on free market prices—up and down or elaborate loans, grants, and government-held food mountains—Mr Block

said that traditional efforts to maintain farm prices by lowering supply would only result in a greater share of the world market for expansionist agricultural rivals, by implication, the EEC.

With many of America's 2.4 million farms in deep financial trouble, particularly the half-million middle-sized farms which produce 40 per cent of American food, Mr Block's bill would put upper limits on annual subsidies to individual farms, phase out minimum prices for dairy products, and shift many loans from the Farmers' Home Administration to the private sector. The theory is to concentrate help on small farmers.

The agriculture lobbies have already counter-attacked with alternative proposals, but as in Europe, the collision between powerful rural myth and reality on the modern farm appears to impede progress, as it has for several years. The vast majority of US farms are part-time hobby farms.

Most of the rural poor have no links with farms and, at the other extreme, big agribusinesses do very well out of government support—including 54 farms (half in California) which received more than \$1 million each in 1983, according to a recent report.

Howe plans Germany discovers Reagan to visits to Soviet spy manual stress prosperity

By our Foreign Staff

The Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, is to visit Poland as part of a government plan to play an active role in the East-West dialogue.

Warsaw will be the Foreign Secretary's last stop on a trip from April 8 to 13, when he goes to East Berlin, and then to Prague. Sir Geoffrey is also going to Romania on February 8 and to Bulgaria on February 10 and 11.

While high-level contacts with these countries is considered important, the visit to Warsaw has added significance because it marks the most decisive step yet in the normalisation of relations between Britain and the Polish regime. It also demonstrates that Poland has overcome its irritation with the visit of Mr Malcolm Rifkind, the Minister of State, to Warsaw last autumn.

Mr Rifkind met leading Polish opposition members, and also made declarations at the grave of the murdered priest Father Popielusko, which were harshly criticised by the Polish government spokesman.

Warsaw also warned that it would expect official visitors to keep to a mutually agreed programme, the German Foreign Minister, Mr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, soon afterwards cancelled a visit to Poland at short notice after apparent disagreement about his programme.

The Italian Foreign Minister, Mr Giulio Andreotti, went ahead with a visit to Warsaw just before Christmas, and visited Father Popielusko's grave.

In London yesterday, officials said that Sir Geoffrey would follow a dignified programme, and that it was reasonable to assume that the Foreign Secretary would meet General Jaruzelski.

Foot in the door

THREE Italian shoe factories are to help ease Russia's perennial footwear shortage. Three factories, each producing two million pairs of shoes annually, are to open in Moscow and the regional centres of Kaluga and Tolyatti, on the Volga river.—Reuter.

From Anna Tomforde in Bonn

The Government has obtained a Soviet directory, known as the Red Book, instructing agents to acquire information on all kinds of Western technology and promising them rapid promotion if they fulfilled four contracts a year.

The book, the size of a telephone directory, is entitled "Coordinated demands for technological information tasks" and is kept and used by Soviet diplomatic and trade missions, according to a report of the Bonn Interior Ministry. A spokesman said that it was obtained by West German counter-intelligence agents.

It gives top priority to information on missile guidance systems, radar, and rocket technology, anti-tank and anti-submarine systems, micro-electronics and large computers. But agents are also requested to acquire apparently harmless details of tractor hydraulic systems, while the ministry said could be used in Soviet armoured vehicles.

The ministry pointed out that Soviet block trading com-

panies in the West were increasingly being used to acquire strategic goods which were subject to embargo.

The Government warned recently that the Soviet Union, and other Eastern block countries, had stepped up their industrial espionage activities considerably, adding that 150 Communist agents have been convicted in West Germany in the past five years.

Last November, West German intelligence authorities arrested a suspected Soviet spy at the Munich-based Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm aerospace company, who is alleged to have betrayed secrets on the Tornado fighter aircraft to the Soviet Union.

While highlighting the danger of espionage, the Government and West German industry have made clear their reluctance regarding American imposed restrictions on the export of sensitive advanced technology to the Soviet Union, a point raised this week in trade talks in Bonn with the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Alexei Antonov.

From our Own Correspondent in Washington

President Reagan's advisers are hoping that his visit to Bonn in May can be arranged so as to treat on a respiratory machine last week, the Kremlin is emphasising that his health gives no cause for concern.

Mr Reagan is due to take part in a routine economic summit of Western and Japanese leaders in Bonn on May 2 to 4. He is expected to accept an invitation to make an official visit to West Germany either before, or more likely, just after the summit as part of a wider programme which will probably include his first visits to Spain and Portugal.

Mr Reagan's presence in Europe so close to the May 8 anniversary of German surrender has drawn the White House into discussions as to if and how he should participate.

Pershing accident 'happened near store of N-warheads'

Rocket parts reportedly hurled to within 250 yards

From our Own Correspondent in Bonn

Nuclear warheads were stored near the Pershing missile which caught fire killing three US soldiers, and the accident could have caused atomic contamination, reports said yesterday.

In the accident near Heilbronn on January 11, 16 American soldiers were seriously injured. The US army said there were no nuclear warheads in the area, but a West German television report said that hurled rocket parts were within 250 yards of American nuclear warheads, and within 400 yards of a built-up area.

The accident has led to considerable disquiet in the Heilbronn area, where most of the Pershing rockets are deployed. The town's conservative mayor, Mr Manfred Wetternann, yesterday said he deplored the US army's information policy on the accident, but said that no additional measures were necessary to

protect the civilian population. But the mayor of nearby Schwabach-Gneund, Mr Norbert Schoch, has been asked by the city council to write a letter to the Defence Minister, Mr Manfred Wörner, demanding that nuclear missiles not be transported through built-up areas.

Mr Schoch said there was grave disquiet among the local population about accidents with rockets which, he said, were dangerous even if they did not carry nuclear warheads.

Six Heilbronn citizens have filed an action with the Constitutional Court, saying that the deployment of Pershing II missiles—and the subsequent danger of accidents—contravenes their basic rights.

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Ice-hit shuttle all set for today

From Mark Tran in Washington

THE space agency said yesterday that it was confident that the space shuttle, Discovery, carrying a top-secret spy satellite, could be launched today, after a day's delay caused by freezing weather.

The Wednesday afternoon blast-off from Cape Canaveral was put off because of the icy cold. Technicians feared that the low temperatures, combined with moist ocean air, would coat the shuttle's fuel tank with ice, which could have broken off and damaged insulation tiles.

Despite the secrecy surrounding the shuttle mission, certain facts have emerged. The payload is a top-secret spy satellite, which is making the fifteen-minute shuttle mission, an electronics intelligence-gath-

Spending on space, page 11

ing satellite to be placed in a stationary orbit 22,300 miles above the equator. The satellite would monitor Soviet missile tests and intercept radio communications over much of Europe and Asia.

It is officially known that the payload contains a rocket system that boosts a satellite into final orbit. The booster missed two years ago in attempting to lift a shuttle payload into a higher orbit.

In efforts to throw off Soviet monitoring, the US withheld the exact launch time of the Discovery, saying that it would take off between 1.15 and 4.15 pm. However, the air force announced that it would give the public a nine-minute advance notice of the impending lift-off. The air force described the policy change as an adequate compromise between the legitimate needs of the public to know and US security concerns.

The nine-minute countdown is not expected to give Soviet ships, satellites, and tracking agencies any added advantage in their attempts to track the flight of the Discovery. The time of deployment of the satellite is one of the most closely guarded secrets.

After launching, all communications between the shuttle and earth will be in code—the first time that transmissions will be blacked out from the public.

Another secret is the landing time. The air force said that it would announce the time 16 hours before landing.

21 lost in sea crash

From Paul Glickman in Tegucigalpa

A US military cargo plane crashed off the north coast of Honduras on Tuesday, and American officials held out little hope that any of the 21 passengers had survived.

The Hercules crashed into the ocean a few hundred yards from the port of Trujillo. It was on a routine supply flight from the Howard air force station in Panama to the regional military training centre at Trujillo. All those on board were US military personnel.

A US navy reconnaissance plane with nine men on board is missing off the Pacific island of Guam. A Pentagon spokesman said yesterday. The plane, a modified Sky Warrior attack bomber, was flying from the Atsugi air base, near Tokyo, and was reported overdue for arrival at Guam.

In an interview yesterday, the Agriculture Secretary, Mr John Block, again repudiated the interventionist structure designed during the New Deal 50 years ago, when 25 per cent of Americans still lived on farms—only 3 per cent do so today—and farm incomes were only 40 per cent of urban ones, which they now roughly equal.

Urging "revolutionary" changes which would seek to create a safety net of supports based on free market prices—up and down or elaborate loans, grants, and government-held food mountains—Mr Block

New rates from Nationwide

From 1st February 1985

	Net
Share Accounts	7.50%
FlexAccounts	7.50%
Bonus-7 Accounts	8.75%
Super Bonus Accounts	9.00%
Bonus-90 Accounts	9.25%
Capital Bonds (23rd Issue)	9.25%
The rate of interest on all existing Capital Bonds will be increased by 0.75% from 1 February 1985. The guaranteed extra interest paid on all existing Capital Bonds continues unchanged.	
Subscription Share Accounts	8.50%
Deposit Accounts	7.25%
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Indians question 1,500 in spy probe

From Ajay Bose in New Delhi

The arrest of more than a dozen civil servants on spying charges during the past week has caused panic in the Indian bureaucracy which fears that a witchhunt may have started. More than 1,500 people are believed to have been questioned so far.

Investigators were reported yesterday to have launched a nationwide search for several missing government officials identified as suspects in the scandal. The Press Trust of India news agency quoted intelligence sources as saying that the police are on the lookout for spies and that the police are on the lookout for spies and that the police are on the lookout for spies.

Most government offices have ceased to function with junior and senior officials too busy discussing the latest arrest to handle their daily work.

In some government departments, personal secretaries and assistants are refusing to carry files on anything remotely related to national security, while many senior bureaucrats have suddenly stopped working late in offices or even taking files home.

A senior official remarked: "We just don't want to take any risks at all. It just means work suffers, it suffers."

The panic has been further heightened by newspaper reports on an alleged witchhunt ordered by the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. With the Government declaring a news blackout on investigations into the spy ring, journalists have been forced to speculate. One national daily this week hinted that scores of top government officials, senior military officers, and even some Indian diplomats have been put under surveillance.

Newspapers and news agencies have also been speculating, often without any basis, on the foreign connection of the arrested spies. The recall of the French deputy military attaché, Colonel Alain Boileau, the diplomat alleged to have received secret documents, has provoked a series of unconfirmed reports that more Frenchmen have disappeared from Delhi in the wake of the spy scandal.

The pro-Soviet daily, The Patriot, carried a story this week alleging that five US and West German members of the diplomatic corps here have been asked to leave. The anti-Soviet lobby, on the other hand, insists that the spy ring was being operated by the Soviet Union.

As speculation on the ramifications of the spy ring continues to grow, intelligence officials are believed to have failed so far to establish any foreign connection with the government leaks. The exception appears to be the French military attaché.

The French diplomat is believed to have been known for local intelligence as a naval intelligence officer.

Troubled Sri Lanka passes the point of no return

From Eric Silver in Colombo

SRI LANKA is trapped in a tragedy of its own making. National and communal leaders are no longer even going through the motions of seeking a political solution to the grievances of the Tamil minority.

Most foreign observers here are convinced that only outside mediation, benign or otherwise, can produce a settlement. The parties themselves have passed the point of no return.

All the signs are, however, that neither India nor the Western donor countries are preparing to act. India, as the regional superpower, has the most leverage. Its armed forces cast a long shadow. The Sri Lankan Government, and the Sinhalese majority for which it speaks, are painfully aware of this.

At the same time, India alone has something it can withhold from the militant Tamils. The Tigers would be tamed soon enough if they could not use the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu as a base.

But Mr Rajiv Gandhi has other priorities. Speculation in Colombo and New Delhi notwithstanding, there are no plans for high-level talks. No Indian initiative is imminent.

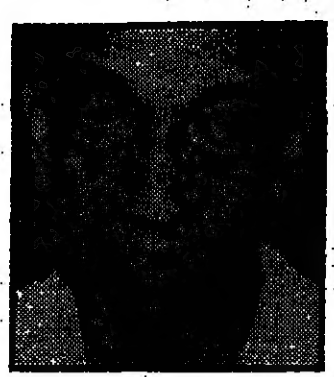
The donor countries whose loans and grants account for 50 per cent of Sri Lanka's budget, are equally reticent. Although some ministers are worried that the West will take its charity elsewhere if there is no progress towards a settlement, the donors have so far imposed no such conditions. That kind of interference is out of fashion.

Sri Lanka receives aid from such "soft" powers as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia, as well as the tougher-minded British and Americans. It would take a crisis to bring them together in applying pressure.

Communal polarisation is wider than ever. The Tamils, who see their people being killed with impunity by the Sinhalese army in the north, feel like second-class citizens. Their political leaders have failed, and the initiative has passed to the extremists.

THREE policemen were killed yesterday when separatist guerrillas set off a landmine under their jeep in Sri Lanka's eastern province, security officials said. Two civilians in the jeep were wounded and taken to a nearby hospital. On Saturday, guerrillas blew up a train killing 27 soldiers and 11 civilians.—Reuters.

President Jayewardene



The majority, as one Western diplomat put it, is showing itself increasingly as "Sinhalese first, Sri Lankans second." A young woman doctor, recently returned from studying in London, asked me what I thought of the situation here. When I began to talk about Tamil resentments, she interrupted: "They're terrorists. They want to destroy this country. All they understand is violence."

The National Security Minister, Mr Lalith Athulthumudali, is probably right when he says that the Government can no longer "sell" negotiations with Tamil politicians who will not take the oath of allegiance to a united Sri Lanka; but President Jayewardene bears some of the blame for that.

A year ago, when he launched his all-party conference, he accepted a compromise with the Tamil United

Liberation Front leaders, by which they agreed to take any autonomous formula back to their constituents. They could not repudiate a separate Tamil state, on which they had fought the last election, but they were saying that partition was not their final word.

By refusing to come up with proposals that had any chance of being accepted by the most moderate Tamils, the President cut the ground from under them. He remained a communal leader. He would not challenge Sinhalese complacency by redefining the status of the northern and eastern Tamils.

His ministers are reduced now to contemplating the consequences. Terrorism has spread southwards from the Jaffna peninsula. Athulthumudali claims that it is being checked, but he is too realistic to delude himself that it can be eradicated.

Tourism, a big foreign currency-earner, has been greatly reduced. Even though most of the traditional holiday resorts are peaceful, tour operators

are taking their groups elsewhere. Few of the burgeoning Ayer's Rock hotels boast more than 40 per cent occupancy.

Sri Lanka is lucky that demand for its high-grade tea has held up, that the Arab Gulf states have not retaliated for the discreet resumption of relations with Israel, and that the donor countries are still paying the bills. But ministers need no reminding that this is a precarious foundation on which to build an economy.

The President is trying to redraw the ethnic map by setting Sinhalese farmers on uncultivated state lands in traditional Tamil districts. But is there enough land available in the right places? Will Sinhalese volunteer to be targets for the gunmen? It looks as if the Government is more interested in playing to the Sinhalese gallery than in solving Sri Lanka's problems.

The pity of it is that, given half a chance, most of the still Tamil population would have fled for much less than Eelam, the separate state.

Twenty-six face trial after assassination of opposition leader at Manila airport

Ver charged in Aquino murder case

Manila: General Fabian Ver, 65, and 25 other men were charged yesterday in connection with the murder of the opposition leader, Benigno Aquino, 17 months after the former senator was killed at Manila airport.

General Ver, aged 65, and eight other people were charged as accessories, and 17 as the principal accused, the Ombudsman, Mr Bernardo Fernandez, told a news conference.

General Ver, a kinsman and confidant of President Marcos, and the others, were also charged in connection with the killing of Rolando Galman, the man the military said killed Mr Aquino. Mr Galman was shot moments after Mr Aquino was murdered.

General Ver has been on leave of absence since he was implicated in Aquino's death by an official inquiry in October. He has said he was not involved.

Mr Fernandez, who brought the charges before a special court, said there was no evidence indicating General Ver's direct or indirect involvement in the murder, and that he could be charged only as an

accessory for allegedly covering up the crime.

Mr Aquino, a political rival of President Marcos, was shot at Manila airport on August 21, 1983, moments after he returned from voluntary exile in the United States. The murder plunged the country into political and economic crisis.

Mr Fernandez said that Mr Galman, whom the military described as a Communist hitman, was used as a decoy to hide the identity of the real assassin. He said that arrest warrants would be served on all 26 within 10 days, but he added that he had recommended those named as accessories should be freed on bail.

He said that he had recommended that others, including Brigadier-General Luther Custodio, head of the aviation security command which provided security for Mr Aquino, should be held without bail.

There was no immediate comment on the case from the presidential palace. General Ver, who cancelled a speaking engagement in Manila yesterday, could not be reached for comment.

The military theory that Communists plotted to kill Mr Aquino was rejected by a commission of inquiry last October, as well as by the Ombudsman to whom President Marcos referred the commission's reports.

The commission's majority report named 26 people, including General Ver, as conspirators, while a minority report, which named only seven people, said that General Ver was not involved.

Mr Aquino's family, which boycotted all the investigations, also made no comment. Family sources said that the Aquinos believed that the real culprit, the Minister of Defence, had not been named by the official inquiries.—Reuters.



The Philippines Ombudsman, Mr Bernardo Fernandez, announces at a press conference in Manila that General Ver and 25 others have been charged in connection with the killing of Benigno Aquino.

No compromise over Zia's election plan

From Alex Brodie in Islamabad

Attempts to persuade opponents of the military regime in Pakistan to take part in elections next month seem to have failed.

General Zia ul-Haq's Cabinet met on Tuesday and afterwards a spokesman ruled out any postponement of the National Assembly elections, which are due to be held on February 25. A postponement would be necessary if there was to be any compromise between the regime and opposition politicians.

The date for filing nominations has passed and none of the leaders of political parties has put his name forward. Last week the regime seemed to be trying to persuade some of the politicians to join in. The disqualification of many of them from taking part in any election was lifted, and a summit meeting of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, the MRD, was allowed.

Many of the leaders of the 11 MRD parties were allowed to meet at the home in Abbottabad of retired Air Marshal Asghar Khan, the leader of one of the parties and a veteran detainee of the regime, who emerged from five years' house arrest last October. Usually the MRD leaders are kept apart by detention or internal exile. However, some, all left wing, could not attend, as they are still in gaol.

In the event the MRD disappointed the regime. It reiterated its unwavering commitment to the 1973, Western-style, parliamentary constitution, and roundly condemned General Zia's non-party election as a fraud.

The only reason for the Government's apparent concessions, said an MRD spokesman, was that it could not find enough people to stand in its elections.

The regime responded within hours to the MRD's statements. It announced that there could be no more opposition summit meetings, arrested three leaders and barred others from attending a planned follow-up meeting in Lahore.

Then the Cabinet met and apparently put paid to speculation that the elections would be postponed to allow an accommodation with the politicians.

Chinese give warning to Hanoi

By John Gitting

AS Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea threatened the main base of the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge rebels, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr Wu Xueqian, yesterday warned Hanoi that China might have to teach it another lesson.

Speaking in Bangkok, Mr Wu said that China would not stand idly by if Vietnam continued to provoke Thailand by its operations against the guerrillas, who are supplied from Thai territory.

In Peking, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman claimed that Vietnamese troops on the Sino-Vietnamese border had killed and wounded several hundred people in Chinese villages since November, despite a unilateral truce recently declared by Hanoi.

Two fresh Vietnamese divisions are reported to have moved up to threaten Phnom Mahal, a complex of Khmer Rouge bases 15 miles inside Kampuchea. That military move, he said, was the Khmer Rouge are counter-attacking to relieve the pressure.

Mr Wu's warning that China would be obliged to "teach Hanoi a lesson" is evidently designed to remind the Vietnamese how the same phrase was used in 1979 to justify Peking's invasion of Vietnam, although this time there is no evidence of similar Chinese preparations on the ground.

While stepping up the military offensive, Vietnam has elaborated its peace proposals at the recent conference of the foreign ministers of Laos, Kampuchea, and Vietnam. The final communiqué said that the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, which China demands, could be "paired" with the exclusion from the area of the genocidal Pol Pot clique, and with the holding of free general elections with the presence of foreign observers.

The proposals go further than those contained in the communiqué of last year's Indochinese Conference, although they fall short of demands for a prior Vietnamese withdrawal and UN-supervised elections.

China is working hard to demonstrate support for the Association of South-east Asian Nations (Asean), which backs the anti-Phnom Penh coalition. Mr Wu said in Bangkok yesterday that Sino-Viet relations would reach "a historic peak" when President Li Xianglin makes the first visit by a Chinese head of state to Thailand in March.

Vietnam, already deeply committed with more than 160,000 troops in Kampuchea supporting the Heng Samrin Government, cannot seriously be said to pose a military threat to Thailand. But Mr Wu's warning against Vietnamese "provocation" of Thailand is a coded threat that if the military changes too drastically within Kampuchea, China reserves the right to take action.

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S. Africa considers forum to end blacks' political isolation

Committee seeks to rebut charges of indifference

From Patrick Laurence in Johannesburg

A "negotiating forum" to give blacks an opportunity to influence the process of political reform may be set up by the Government, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, the Minister of Cooperation and Development, said in an interview published yesterday.

Such a forum would encourage black leaders now functioning outside officially sanctioned political institutions — to contribute to the discussions in the special cabinet committee on the political future of blacks. Dr Viljoen said the Government would be interested in the views of blacks outside the "homelands".

The committee's work has been largely confidential but it has failed to attract much interest from blacks except, possibly, those holding office in government-created political institutions in the "homelands".

A spokesman for the United Democratic Front, Mr "Terror" Lekota, was cool about Dr Viljoen's forum concept. He feared that it was a prelude to creating a "fourth chamber" in the new tripartite Parliament for blacks living outside their supposed "homelands". Anticipating an attempt to divide blacks into different camps, he said: "We cannot see our people accepting this. Only a constitution embracing all the people will bring peace."

clear sign of official concern at the lack of enthusiasm for its bid to reform the political system.

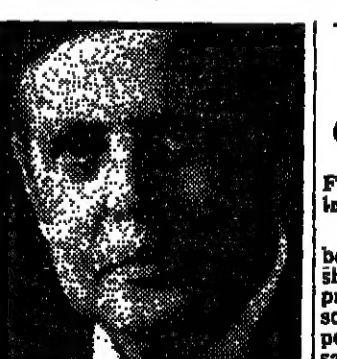
Dr Viljoen, a member of the cabinet committee, pinpointed one of the committee's conspicuous weaknesses: it represents only one party, the Government, involved in the process of reform.

While wanting constructive input from black leaders outside the system, Dr Viljoen laid down two prerequisites for reform: acknowledgement of South Africa's ethnic diversity and the need for group differentiation in political structures; and the need to maintain South Africa's economic and political standards.

A spokesman for the United Democratic Front, Mr "Terror" Lekota, was cool about Dr Viljoen's forum concept. He feared that it was a prelude to creating a "fourth chamber" in the new tripartite Parliament for blacks living outside their supposed "homelands". Anticipating an attempt to divide blacks into different camps, he said: "We cannot see our people accepting this. Only a constitution embracing all the people will bring peace."



Mr Chris Heunis: Seeking political solutions



Dr Viljoen: Seeking political solutions

Wide disagreement on future of Taba

From Arie Haskel in Jerusalem

In advance of the talks to be held on Sunday in Beer-sheva on the future of the disputed border strip of Taba, south of the Israeli Red Sea port of Eilat, the US ambassador, Mr Samuel Lewis, yesterday conferred with the Foreign Minister, Mr Shamir.

At Sunday's talks the American delegation is expected to include a representative of the multinational force (MFO) charged with monitoring Israeli-Egyptian peace in the Sinai desert.

Concurrently with the meeting between the ambassador and the foreign minister, Israeli officials conducted separate background briefings for local and foreign correspondents. From these, it became clear that the starting positions of the Israeli and Egyptian sides will be different, with the Egyptians seeking international arbitration to settle the future of the Taba area.

The Israelis stress that they see the Beer-sheva talks as no more than technical negotiations of present problems which could be the forerunner of high-level talks between Israel and Egypt.

Even on the future role of the MFO, the gap between the sides is wide, with Egypt saying that the force should take the total responsibility for the maintenance of security and law and order there.

The Israelis, on the other hand, say that since there is an Israeli luxury hotel, tourist village, and beach facilities at Taba, law and order has to be an Israeli responsibility, although they agree that overall security should be safeguarded by the MFO.

The Israelis make no secret of the fact that they think Egypt is exaggerating the importance of this small border strip, pointing out that Israel has adhered to the letter of the peace agreement returning the whole of Sinai to Egypt. They want Sunday's talks to

be expanded to include other aspects of the border areas between the two countries, such as the future of a canal camp residents in the Rafah area, who are cut off by the border from jobs in the Gaza Strip, and the recovery of the bodies of Israeli soldiers still missing.

Israel's Foreign Ministry has meanwhile won Cabinet approval for the idea of reactivating the Israeli consulate in Hong Kong, in preparation for Britain's handing the colony back to China in 15 years' time.

The last Israeli diplomat left Hong Kong 10 years ago, and since then its interests have been handled by a member of the local Jewish community, who has served as honorary consul.

In southern Lebanon, the skies cleared yesterday and the cold wind dropped, enabling the Israeli forces to speed up the withdrawal of heavy equipment from the dismantling of army camps in the Sidon area and along the Awali river. Evacuation of this part of southern Lebanon is due to be completed by mid-February.

Patrick Kenney adds: Britain is ready to provide additional logistic support for UN Truce Supervision Force in Lebanon, which might include help on land and air transport facilities, as the Israeli forces move out.

The pledge was given by Mrs Thatcher to the UN Secretary-General, Mr Perez de Cuellar, in her talks with him in London yesterday.

The Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, later told Parliament that "the British Government has emphasised to all parties the need for agreed and effective security arrangements in areas to be vacated by Israeli forces."

"A UN presence could play a valuable part in these arrangements. It is important that all the governments concerned, not least the Lebanese, should now make practical proposals," he said.

Ethiopia's starving face cholera threat

By Michael Simmons

Fears are growing among famine relief workers in Ethiopia that cholera, now claiming dozens of lives a day at one of their camps may spread. The threat posed by the disease is compounded by the Ethiopian Government's refusal to acknowledge the existence of the outbreak. Aid workers are affected camp, about 150 miles north of Addis Ababa, said there were no known plans to immunise people at risk, but that intra-camp equipment was being sought from the capital urgently.

It is now estimated that nearly eight million people in the country are being fed at about 200 relief centres. Many are suffering from diarrhoea, usually as a result of unclean drinking water, and diarrhoea is a main symptom of cholera.

The logistics of getting food and medical supplies to the worst-hit areas continue to be affected by the Government's conflict with the Eritreans. A statement issued in London yesterday by the Eritrean Relief Committee accused Colonel Mengistu, the Ethiopian leader, of using the famine "as a new weapon in his armoury against us."

The committee's chairman, Mr Mohammed Osman Yusuf, claimed last night that a cargo of grain intended for Eritrea was taken from an Australian ship last week and was now in the hands of the Ethiopian army.

He also said that information was received yesterday that new laws had been introduced in some northern towns, which provide the death penalty for anyone leaving these towns — Assab, Massawa, and

Asmara — with more than a kilogram of sugar or five kilograms of grain.

Meanwhile, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, in Nairobi, said yesterday that four out of every five children crossing the Ethiopian frontier to make for camps in eastern

Leader comment, page 10

Sudan were suffering from severe malnutrition. Many of those making the journey, with or without parents, had walked up to 30 days to find sanctuary, usually moving by night, according to UN reports, to avoid being taken by the army.

A day of action for Africa's starving millions was launched by 20 aid agencies working in the Karamoja region of Uganda.

was backed by all the chief political parties.

Banks stayed open late to take donations, the Bundestag held a special debate on the food crisis in Africa, and President von Weizsaecker, the appeal's chief sponsor, urged the public to dig deep. "The poor cannot wait until reforms are introduced in Europe and development problems in Africa have been tackled," he said in a television broadcast.

Churches rang their bells at midday, and Chancellor Kohl and his ministers gave donations when the Development Aid Minister, Jurgens Warnke, collected for the appeal at yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

Britain yesterday announced an emergency aid grant of £227,000 to help drought victims in the Karamoja region of Uganda.

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Rik Mayall is stepping out of the box and on to the National stage. Waldemar Januszczak meets a Young One who has found a Russian soulmate

Gogol and me? Just a pair of prats

Rik Mayall: taking the lead in *The Government Inspector* — picture by Graham Turner

IT MIGHT seem at first as if Rik Mayall is an unlikely choice for the leading role in the new National Theatre production of Nikolai Gogol's *The Government Inspector*. But read director Richard Eyre's notes for his actors:

"Klestakov. A young man of about 23, slender rather than stocky — one of those people whom office colleagues call skivers. He speaks and behaves without any consideration for anything or anybody. He's quite incapable of giving his whole attention to any single idea. His speech is convulsive and words jerk out unexpectedly." Gogol clearly wrote the part with Rik Mayall in mind.

Mayall has made a swift name for himself as the creator of two of the least appealing young men ever to disgrace the British television screen. As the giggling, snooty Brummie, Kevin Turvey, he was an instant success in *A Kick Up the Eighties*. As nasty Rik in *The Young Ones* he made J.R. look like Father Christmas.

Gogol's Klestakov is a penniless young scrounger from St. Petersburg who arrives in a small Russian

town — "the capital city of Nowhere," to quote Ousp. Klestakov's none too faithful man-servant — with neither a rouble in his pocket nor a nugget of decency in his heart. Ousp and Klestakov hole up at the local inn where they set about running up a huge bill.

Just before they are about to be thrown out, Klestakov is mistaken for a government inspector sent from St. Petersburg to investigate the bribery, incompetence, nepotism and corruption which is endemic in the town. Much to his delight, he must spend the rest of the play finding new ways of accepting the bribes which the frightened townsfolk insist on pressing into his hands.

Originally Rik Mayall was approached to play Tony Lumpkin in the National production of *She Stoops to Conquer*. But the part failed to move him. In Klestakov, however, he recognised a kindred spirit. "A very particular type of person. It's something that I instinctively want to take the piss out of, that you can't put into words. It's something about selfishness, about being

totally self-centred, about being uncomfortable when anyone is better than him. Someone who's so self-centred that he gets paranoid. It's a kind of ugliness that I'm very attracted to."

Reading between the lines, Mayall thinks that the character of Klestakov is a thinly veiled representation of Gogol himself. "Maybe he was trying to distance himself from his own position. He was a young prat who thought he was important, and so he wrote a play about a young prat who was self-important. In my big headed moments, that's what I like to think I did in *The Young Ones*. That's why it's so attractive because it's so similar to the stuff I was putting down. It's both of our ideas dovetailing. Me and Gogol's."

There has been no shortage of critics who wish to see *The Government Inspector* not as a simple comedy of mistaken identity but as a biting political satire on corruption in 19th century Russia. After all, Gogol was forced to flee to Italy after the stir caused by its production. Mayall doesn't see it that way. Gogol wrote *The*

Government Inspector to please the Tsar by mocking the provinces, and was heartbroken when the play was taken up by the radicals. If Mayall had his way some of the contemporary jokes which are no longer effective would be dropped and replaced by new ones. Gogol would have liked that.

"I've just taken my brief as getting as many laughs as I can." Is that what the director wanted? "That's what I've taken," he snaps back, in a tough manner. I recognise from Rik in *The Young Ones*.

"I have trouble coming to terms with other people's concepts of how you should be behaving or how you should be thinking of yourself. Trying to make some distinction between stand-up comedy and being an actor. Next big step on your road to the top, they say. I don't see it in those terms. So I'm doing a gig here and it's a bit of a building near Waterloo."

In the flesh Mayall is altogether calmer and more thoughtful than his twitzy stage persona would have you believe. He is also a good deal nicer, taking time

and care over his answers, worrying about them, trying hard, only occasionally fixing you with those Rik-eyes and letting you know that he'd really to smug something nasty on your nice clean shirt for asking a question like that.

He has no time, for instance, for those, like me, who insist on seeing him as a satirist rather than a stand-up comic. "Satire's just a way of making money for writers on *Weekend Update*. Satire implies being quite clever and thinking carefully what angle to take rather than doing something instinctively. My instinct is to represent anybody. I've got my political beliefs and they probably spill into my work. But when you start giving people what they want rather than what you're best at that's when you start to be a shit comedian."

He's also keen that people shouldn't see too much of the real Rik Mayall on the Terry Wogan show or read about him in newspapers, for the same reason that Samson didn't want his hair cut off.

"Interviews are really

want people to see me as I am really because the work loses half its power. After you saw Wogan and then you saw Kevin [Mayall] he was laughing at me instead of Kevin. I had my name taken off a Kick Up the Eighties. I was just Kevin Turvey. People really believed that he existed." Another of these is-he-real-or-isn't-he manoeuvres was to call the obnoxious character in *The Young Ones*, Rik. It was a kind of treble bluff.

Back in the days when he appeared as a stand-up comic in the Comedy Store, he used to get up on stage and read poems about Vanessa Redgrave, bad poems, delivered completely deadpan until the audience actually believed that he believed he was a poet. Not wishing to offend him, the audience laughed behind his hands. Couldn't stop laughing behind his hands. Those are the kind of real life laughs Rik Mayall works hard for.

"I met Jimmy Lee from Slade and he was really disappointed. He said you're really ordinary aren't you. But that means it's worked before. That's the trick. And that's why I shouldn't be telling you."



JEANNETTA COCHRANE
Edward Greenfield

Le nozze di Cherubino

MORE SALIERI than Mozart, one might say of *Le nozze di Cherubino*. Giles Swayne has had the charming idea not merely of providing a sequel to *Figaro* (no novelty that) but of using unexpected forces to do so. Simple continuo (two harpsichords, cello and double bass) plus the orchestra, with Swayne's support with the rest of the "orchestration" given to those of the 12 singers not actually singing solos.

The result in the big numbers (many more assembled than in the original) is a sort of Mozart Swingle-fied. For that reason the composer claims it as not just spoof Mozart, but original Swayne. As Mozart, Swayne is writing is lively, fluent and inventive, and wittily keeps bringing in half-quotations from famous moments, but he is rather too wedded to a yearning mania with much chromaticism in minor keys, rare in Mozart and here devalued.

Whether or not one considers that Swayne's musical jape sustains itself over a whole evening, his salvation lies in his tribute to Da Ponte. Reading the imposed by involved outline of plot beforehand, I was hardly prepared for the way that the story line worked just as in genuine Mozart-Da Ponte.

So Cherubino, back from military service, seeks to seduce Barbarina and it is their pair, not the happily married Figaro and Susanna, who are central to the piece. By the end of act one, Swayne's sextet finale has that pair ingeniously surrounded by four predators, with Barbarina lusted after by the Count and Donna Anna borrowed from Don Giovanni, now a super-grande. Like Basilio the effete Count in turn, the effete Cherubino the moment he claps eyes on him.

To make sexual identities even odder, Cherubino (as in Mozart) is played by a mezzo soprano, and at the end Ottavio and Basilio get paired.

Even if Swayne in his eagerness at times goes too far in undergrating humour, his use of an Italian text provides an extra layer of parody and skilfully frames the absurdities. Whatever the piece's ultimate aesthetic value it is certainly a fun evening, not many librettos for comic opera have so much match this in effectiveness.

Swayne himself conducted the singers and players of Co-Opera from the second harpsichord and drew consistently lively performances. Pastiche Mozart is just as hard to sing as the genuine article, so one really needed voices of international calibre. There were moments of rawness, shaky intonation and woolly definition, but in Michael Hunt's production (using chairs as props and not much else) each character firmly made its mark.

There was admirable projection from, among others, Linda Hibberd as Cherubino, Birgitta Angsmayr as Barbarina, Timothy Yealland as the Count and Harry Chambers as Basilio. More performances are scheduled tomorrow and Saturday.

ELIZABETH HALL
Hugh Canning

King's Singers

ON THEIR return to a warmly welcoming, if less than crowded, Queen Elizabeth Hall for the first time in three years, the King's Singers may have harboured understandable doubts about absence making the heart grow fonder. Had their friends and supporters in the capital deserted them? Were they just a shade old hat or had the GLC's inescapable decision to pursue only Festival Hall concerts on its Underground posters claimed its first big-name victim?

The second explanation is the more likely, though there was a strong sense of déjà vu in a programme of decid-

edly mixed blessings. The last few years of heady success have taken the six merry madrigalists with ever-increasing regularity to the heartlands of sentiment and nostalgia, to Germany and the United States, and it may be difficult these days to strike a balance between leading out the popular hits to the fans and maintaining a high artistic profile for the connoisseurs.

That these vocalists are musicians of distinction and accomplishment was borne out in their whistle-stop Matrigal History Tour, beginning in 16th century Spain with Andalusian guitar, and proceeding, via Ludwig Senfle's beautifully sustained lament, Ach, Elstern, and Lassus's amiable *Sonnet bonjour*, to the sensuous harmonic domain of Gesualdo's *Langueuse*. An animated musical card game devised by Alessandro Striggio, father of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, provided them with an opportunity to display their histrionic talents, as entertaining as ever.

The British premiere of Ned Rorem's *Pilgrim Strangers*, a 20-minute dramatic narrative on Walt Whitman's words, commissioned by the King's Singers last year drew a lukewarm response from an audience primarily there for the high jinks. But who could blame them? Rorem's mild-mannered response to Whitman's often harrowing protest against war sounded like meandering Britten without the anger. Possibly the composer, who had wanted to weave a garland of delicious madrigals, balked at the notion of an accessible, audience-friendly anti-war piece.

On happier ground, the Singers closed with four-part *Janecek Songs* — the vocal quartet perhaps not quite as robust as he intended, and their traditional arrangements in close harmony. Unforgettable was a lithe, buzzing spoof of *The Flight of the Bumble Bee* and an evil send-up of Tony Bennett, courtesy Spike Milligan, "left my heart in San Francisco, left my knees down in Peru, I left my wooden leg in Winnipeg, my wig in Timbuktu."

ST JOHN'S
Michael John White

Lontano

INDEFATIGABLE, irresistible and a true discovery of her concert dates in London, almost inescapable, the multi-talented conductor and composer Odaline de la Martinez must have had some faith in the qualities of James Lloyd's orchestrated song "What De You Want to Have programmed it for the last of her ensemble's French Impressions series at St John's.

I didn't. And I wondered why Lontano, willingly admitted, "such" ungratefully abusive, not to say demanding, music on themselves when it gave back so their voices of international calibre. The instrumental writing was crude, poorly balanced, and obscured the tenor vocal line whose sense, as language, was not in any case an obvious source of concern to the composer. For what the programme claimed to be an "erotic song" it was about as stimulating as a chronic dose of flatulence.

We all had a far better return from the French items which fulfilled the Galle requirement, in the title of this concert, "Les Jeunes de la Musique" — a group of young composers belonging within the precincts of the avant garde where Lontano most familiarly roams.

The prize of the evening was a splendid, showcase performance of Debussy's *Cello Sonata* given by Margaret Powell, fluted, and with a touch of flamboyant daring that in no way diminished the care and penetration in her playing.

More Debussy from Ruth Crochall, Violin Sonata, wasn't quite so distinguished in so far as it did not give free enough rein to the sweeping undulation of the melodic line. Too anxious, I thought, and without the total security of technique to let the musical effects speak for themselves; better to fall full weight into Debussy's downward portamentos than to descend with calculated caution.

Even so, I liked the lyrical detailing Miss Crochall provided, as I enjoyed the firm but subtle support of her accompanist, Sheldagh Sutherland.

Dale Harris reports from Washington on Degas the brilliant illusionist

A master of the dance class

IT IS doubtful whether any exhibition at the National Gallery, Washington, during the past decade has offered as much sheer pleasure as Degas: The Dancers, organised to mark the 150th anniversary of the artist's birth and on show in L.M. Pea's spectacular east wing until March.

In Degas's casual-seeming vignettes of backstage life, of performances viewed from odd angles of the auditorium (from behind a lady's back, for example, or the neck of a double bass), of young girls in tattered skirts rehearsing on stage, standing about in casual poses or facing the gruelling demands of a ballet class, the evanescent magic of the theatre is both intensified and made enduring.

The public, often blind to the genius of more austere but equally great artists, responds almost viscerally to the sensuous appeal of Degas's dance subjects. For many years, indeed, among the most popular themes for calendar art and postcards. You could hear people murmuring with gratification as they moved from painting to painting, responding to the sudden blaze of vermilion in a dancer's sash, the almost phosphorescent blues and

greens of the scenery against which they are juxtaposed in their pink and white dresses, the apocryphal glow from the gas lighting that suffuses everyone on stage and transfigures with illusionary beauty even the most awkward or transitional pose.

But there is illumination of another sort, as well as delight — to be found in this show. As one soon realises, Degas: The Dancers has been designed to reveal the seriousness of the artist's interest in the ballet, to make clear that he was doing more than merely recording his unconsidered impressions of one particularly pretty side of theatrical life in late 19th-century Paris.

In any case, nothing Degas painted was unconsidered. What looks like a realistic glimpse of a swiftly vanishing incident — the moment when a curtain is lowered and arbitrarily cuts off the upper part of the performers' bodies; the sudden desire a dancer feels to scratch her back, or yawn, or stretch her weary limbs; the impulse she has to bend down and adjust the ribbons of her ballet shoes results from the calculated manipulation of line and colour for the ends of a highly structured pictorial statement.

Because of the way this show has been organised — in groups according to subject matter, and with the major canvases glossed, as it were, by preliminary drawings and related pastels — it is possible to see, as never before, how passionately the artist devoted himself to seizing upon the permanent features and underlying principles of an art form whose very essence is mutability.

For Degas's spontaneity is an illusion — or, better yet, a brilliantly sustained confidence trick. Like Watteau, Degas worked his paintings up in the studio from notebooks, deriving his compositions not from direct observation of theatrical incidents but from a repertoire of drawings made especially for that purpose. From these drawings he selected whatever he needed for the particular subject he had in mind. As he once said to his great supporter, George Moore: "No art was ever less spontaneous than mine."

And for all the charm they exert, Degas's paintings of the ballet concern themselves a great deal more with the craft of dancing, its rigours and discipline, than with the appealing effects its youthful practitioners are capable of

achieving. In Degas's time, ballet outside Russia (and possibly Denmark) had fallen to the lowest estate it had known in the 200 years or so of its existence. Little more than a diversion for Parisian aristocrats and members of the haute bourgeoisie, who chose their mistresses from the corps de ballet, it survived as an art principally through the invariability of the technique that, day after day, was taught in the classroom.

In this demanding and miraculously deceptive art, the most strenuous aspects of which are supposed to look as graceful as possible, Degas found the perfect analogy to his own conception of painting. The visible world is not so much reflected in his work as remade. Even when working from nature," he told Moore, "one has to compose." Thus a masterpiece like the *Musée d'Orsay's Classe de Danse* is not in any sense a souvenir, it is an invention. Under the figure of the venerable ballet master, Jules Perrot, X-rays reveal a quite different, more youthful character. Perrot is at the centre of the finished painting only because it suited Degas's recreative need to have him there.



Detail from *The Dance Class*

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Tough ditties Robin Denselow reviews the latest rock releases

"WHAT song are we doing? Oh yes... One, two, three, four..." And so the long-estimating American punks of them all crash off into yet another set of brief, pounding songs, with particular, part serious lyrics belted out intelligently and slickly over the wall-of-sound fuzzed guitars, rattling through the fast chord changes.

Nine years on, there's still no one who sounds quite like the Ramones, and on *Tough To Die* (Beggars Banquet) they sound more like their early selves than ever. They may never have achieved massive record sales but they can still pack concert halls and produce an exhilarating sound. The new album must rank as one of their best, with the old energy and style mixed with some good, strong lyrics and even a touch of experiment.

Dave Stewart of the Eurythmics produced one track, *Howling At The Moon*, which has a jagged keyboard opening and shows the band at their most commercial. Elsewhere, it's back to basic with melodies sometimes reminiscent of old Beach Boys given a thunderous backing. At times the Ramones seem to be getting thoughtful in their old age — I Am Not Afraid Of Life and the furious *Planet Earth* 1985 have rather desperate, gloomy lyrics critical of Russia as well as America. But on the final *No Go* it's back to joyful rant.

Don't Let The Hope Close (Hope Springs). The Hope in question, as all north London pub-rockers will know, is an Islington watering-hole with a tiny downstairs room that over the years has provided a starting point for a host of artists, from Costello and Dury through to the Jam and the Stranglers. This compilation album has come out rather late, for the Hope has in fact already closed down, but it provides a good update on current pub-rock fashions. Rockabilly and punkabilly bands rub shoulders with "countryabilly" artists who bash new life into Irish and country songs.

The album consists of rare or unreleased tracks by 17 different exponents of good-time bar-room styles some simply rough and some rough but highly entertaining. The best of a very assorted bunch, on the rockabilly side, are Serious Drinking's burst of class-warfare, *Pillars Of Society*, and the Screaming Blue Messiahs' yodelling, strangely Dylanesque *Travelling The Dog*. On the Irish folkabilly side there's *The Men*. They Couldn't Hang with their Pogues-style version of an old Dublin favourite, now called *Whiskey In My Grog*, while the Pogues themselves contribute a strong, straightforward version of the Australian anti-war song from the Gallipoli campaign, *And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda*. They didn't sound this sober the night I saw them at the Hope.

Kantata: Asiko (Oval). Formed last year in Berlin by former members of George Darks' band, Kantata follow Darks in mixing hi-life styles from their native Ghana with slick European production and the musical influences from the Caribbean and the American dance scene. The result is a lush, commercial-sounding fusion that's best when the chanting Asanti vocals are matched with a solid Western dance beat. At the start of the second side there are less African influences, more soca and funk, and the mixture sounds rather more ordinary.

Fleetwood Mac: *Live In Boston* (Shangri). The historical curiosity of the week is this very well-recorded 1969 concert set from a band who, at that time, were not MOE American-based superstars but leading exponents of the British blues movement. The album was recorded on the band's second visit to America, shortly before the guitar heroes Peter Green and Jeremy Spencer quit, for either health or religious reasons. Their playing dominates a strong but inevitably very dated album, in which both percussion and vocals are mixed well back behind the snarling guitars.

The material ranges from slow, rolling blues like *Black Magic Woman* (which had been a British hit for them) to more driving up-tempo numbers like *Can't Hold On*, and it's easy to see why Green was then regarded as a rival to Eric Clapton.

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Thinking hard amid the Grand debris

When a shattering outrage like the Brighton hotel bombing takes place, the instinctive reflex is to demand a sweeping and ferocious response. Last October, this instinct produced two reactions. The first was to find a scapegoat. The second was a demand for wholesale tightening of preventive security in order to stop the unthinkable from happening again. Initial responses of this kind are understandable and natural. But they are psychologically complex. Retribution and guilt sit cheek by jowl with rational effectiveness. And such instincts have almost always proved an unreliable basis for long-term policy and lawmaking.

A decade ago, within days of the Birmingham pub bombings, the Wilson government pushed a temporary Prevention of Terrorism Act through Parliament. That law remains not without its occasional legitimate uses, but also providing a large and convenient fig-leaf for some highly dubious police trawling within the Irish community. It was not a healthy precedent and, as the Grand Hotel bomb showed, it has not prevented the determined terrorist. No subsequent government has publicly accepted this argument. But, to judge by the tone of his remarks in the House of Commons this week, this lesson has been well learned by the Home Secretary, Leon Brittan. On Tuesday, in his statement to the House on the Brighton bomb and on the findings of the inquiry by Mr John Hoddinott, deputy chief constable of Hampshire, Mr Brittan offered no legislative panacea. Indeed, in unlikely agreement with the urgings of Mr Tony Benn, Mr Brittan went out of his way to state that the balance between security and the exercise of civil liberties should not be lightly altered. "Nothing that I have said," the Home Secretary emphasised, "indicates the slightest readiness to slide over civil liberties." Words to remember.

Having said which, there are some very unsatisfactory and unresolved aspects of the Home Secretary's report. One has to be a little cautious about making these criticisms, since the text of the Hoddinott report has been kept secret. Mr Brittan only gave MPs the gist of the findings. He

has even refused to reveal the full report in private, on "privy councillor" terms, to Opposition front benches. This suggests an element of bluff in Mr Brittan's relatively low profile public response. Nevertheless, the Grand Hotel bomb came close to obliterating the Cabinet. Judged against the magnitude of that act, the Hoddinott report exposes two exceptionally serious areas of failure. The first is in the police's physical preparations. Mr Hoddinott has given his Sussex colleagues a pretty easy ride. Their plans were "proper and reasonable." They carried them out "competently and professionally." This is a lot to swallow. The fact is that the Brighton conference area (which included the Grand Hotel) was cordoned off for the week of the Conservative conference. Nevertheless it was pretty easy to get through the barrier and, once through it, access to the Grand was straightforward, at all hours. Searches of the hotel were clearly inadequate, judged not merely by the fact that the bomb went off, but by the admission that not all rooms were searched and by the ease with which it was possible to move around the hotel.

The second big question is whether the police really understood enough about the threat which they faced. Mr Hoddinott says that they had access to the relevant intelligence. Perhaps so. But did they know how to draw lessons from it? Clearly not. Information is one thing, and the Special Branch has plenty of that. Knowledge based on that information is quite another matter. And there is plenty of accumulated evidence that the Special Branch and MI5 do not know how to make sound deductions from the mass of information at their disposal. The Special Branch gets off particularly lightly from what Mr Brittan told the Commons on Tuesday and that may well be because he wishes to protect them from criticism while they are under investigation by the Home Affairs Select Committee. Nevertheless, Mr Brittan is setting up a new improved counter-terrorist liaison group to advise on future threats. Liaison is naturally, blandly welcome. But no amount of liaison is a substitute for improved and better focused methods of intelligence interpretation.

Bags of convenience

Another disturbing case of lack of proper liaison between government agencies was brought to light yesterday in the

report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons on the abuse of diplomatic status. One of the principal criticisms is in a generally level-headed and balanced set of findings from an investigation prompted by the Libyan embassy shooting and the Diklo kidnapping is directed at the poor coordination between the Home Office and the Foreign Office. The siege of the People's Bureau after the murder of Policewoman Fletcher was made necessary by the Government's correct concern to be seen adhering to the rather sweeping provisions of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations. But the decisions at the end to let all those in the building leave the country, including the murderer(s), and not to search their diplomatic baggage which must have contained the weapon(s), seem to have been taken without reference to the international law experts of the FCO.

In the end it was the Committee that found a loophole in the Convention which could have made it possible to stop the baggage leaving the country: because Libya reserved the right to turn back suspect diplomatic bags when it ratified the Convention, any country with which it has diplomatic relations has the same right in dealing with Libyan bags. The decision to do nothing was based on political judgment, and in view of the large number of potential (and actual) British hostages in Libya we must, however reluctantly, concur with the Committee and those who took it that it was right. Those regimes most likely to abuse diplomatic immunity are also the most likely to engage in tit-for-tat actions.

The Foreign Office comes off worst in the report for failing to cope with the turbulent changes within the People's Bureau, which often left it unaware of the identity of the head of mission and the right of the occupants to diplomatic status. There was nothing to be done about the various palace revolutions in St James's Square, but the FCO could and should have kept tabs on the diplomatic staff, as was shown when it expelled one suspect head of mission as soon as he had been obliged to identify himself. Firmness tempered by pragmatic restraint is a better policy than laissez-faire and undue punctilio, which too often looks like timidity. This does not affect the underlying principle that diplomatic immunity is essential to international relations. Unfortunately the Government, if it now decides on a narrower interpretation, will be swimming against the tide. Diplomatic privilege and its abuse is one of the world's few growth industries.

A disaster compounded

Those many people round the world who were caught up in the great wave of compassion for the suffering people of Ethiopia may have thought, as they dug into pockets and purses, that the plight of the stricken land was so abysmally bad that it could only get better. In the past few days, however, it has become cruelly clear that there are uncharted depths of misery yet to be plumbed. The added blow of one of the worst railway disasters in history, was a savage coincidence; but the Ethiopian government's decision to seize a shipload of corn donated by Australians because some of it was intended for a war zone is another example of how man compounds the effects of a hostile nature.

Since the extent of the famine became known, the character of the Addis Ababa regime has been widely broadcast. Whatever else it may be, therefore, the hoarding of the shipment as an unwarranted interference in the country's internal affairs is no surprise. The donors thus showed, at worst, a touch of naivety, and the anger of their government in Canberra is entirely understandable. The tragedy is that other potential donors may now be discouraged. Meanwhile it is reported that cholera has struck some of the refugee camps; that measles is running riot among Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan, although there is a large stock of vaccine as close as Khartoum; and, perhaps most startling and frightful of all, that the Ethiopian government has begun to transplant 1.5 million people from the worst drought-zone in the north to more fertile areas to the west of the capital. Whether the new land will remain fertile for long is open to doubt; and the land being cleared is much too close to the area in revolt. At the same time the government now speaks of 9 million famine sufferers, the highest figure yet quoted. In spite of everything, this is no time to stop giving.

A tax is a tax is a tax

Mr Nigel Lawson hopes to go down in history as a tax-cutting Chancellor. To which end he is prepared—as evidenced by this week's spending White Paper—to hack back still further the budgets for housing

and industrial support. But the methods he is increasingly adopting to provide extra income for reductions in direct tax ought to be a matter of grave concern to all political parties.

According to the White Paper, the Government is planning to make the nationalised industries reduce their level of external finance from an expected £3.2 billion this year (admittedly blown off course by the effects of the miners' strike) to £1.3 billion in the next financial year. A further fall of £178 million is expected the following year followed by a net repayment of £110 million in 1987-8. In other words, by then the Government is expecting nationalised industries as a whole to be bankers to the Government rather than vice versa.

Now it is one thing for this to happen in special cases like gas where the taxpayer has a right to cream off surplus North Sea profits. But quite another when the nationalised industries as a whole are used as a milch cow by the Treasury. In order to make up for the money they have to retribute to the Treasury (which reduces the Government's borrowing requirement) they will have to raise their prices or cut expenditure by more than they would otherwise have done.

There are several objections to this. First, it is a naked exploitation of the monopoly powers of those industries which this government above all, with its concern for competition, should shun like the plague. Second, it is economically unsound because much of the tax cuts they are planning for the lower paid in the Budget will simply be clawed back through higher prices, for water, electricity, gas, transport and so forth. How will this stimulate the economy? Third, it is socially objectionable because the Government is raising money from consumers of the products of the utilities, many of whom are too poor to pay tax in order to redistribute it in the form of tax cuts for those who at least earn enough to pay tax. This is a regressive redistribution of incomes.

All this, of course, is aside from the Government's 24 billion a year of asset sales which is turning nationalised industry capital into income to be spent—the kind of thing which made the Earl of Stockton shudder in the Lords yesterday. What Mr Lawson is engaging in is surrogate, or backdoor, taxation, and it should be honestly reflected in any figures he produces claiming reductions in the overall burden of taxation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How the Government missed all its targets at GCHQ

Sir,—As we are about to reach January 25, the first anniversary of the GCHQ "union ban," it is a good time to review what it has actually achieved.

The original announcement emphasised the withdrawal of employers' rights under the Employment Protection Acts in an attempt to avoid public discussion of the work of GCHQ. The fact that GCHQ is now firmly entrenched in the vocabulary of the nation demonstrates the ineffectiveness of that decision.

It was argued that the union ban itself would render the department immune from industrial action. But the action taken by deunionised staff after the "ban" showed this to be a wrong assumption: in fact that industrial action would never have taken place had there still been proper union representation.

The major effect of the "ban," however, has been to lower morale. Staff with marketable skills have de-

cided to pursue their careers in the private sector.

Its effect on the operation of the department is incalculable, but it is certainly greater than anything union members caused in the past; they always displayed a responsible attitude to the security of the "national security" argument invoked by the Government to win a legal case has also been shown to be false.

In all respects, therefore, the ban has failed to achieve its stated objective. Even at this late stage the Prime Minister has the chance to show strength of character by admitting the mistake and reversing the decision.

May I conclude with a quotation from a booklet issued to staff attending management courses at GCHQ: "It is particularly important that you create an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect between you and your staff." Wise words. — Robin Smith.

38 Upper Park Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

A VAT that's all or nothing

Sir,—Peter Fiddick rightly points out (The Media Page, January 18) that once the zero-rating of books and newspapers, etc. for the purposes of VAT is abolished, this country will not be free, under European Community law to reintroduce it.

The position is, however, more serious than this. The

Sixth VAT Directive would also seem to prohibit the introduction of VAT on these items at a rate which is less than the full rate. The choice facing the Chancellor is therefore a simple one: it is all or nothing.—Yours faithfully, Anthony Arnall, Kettering, Northants.

Miscellany at large

Sir,—Doubtless it was just an electronic aberration, but the other morning the overhead gantry on the M1 southbound (Junction 2) made an interesting and controversial reading as your esteemed journal.

Above the "slow" lane was the number "50"; above the "middle" lane the number "80"; and over the "fast" lane was simply a downward-pointing arrow.

The first, quite clearly, is the speed at which those who control traffic would like us always to drive; the second, a topical reference to the limit recommended by the Commons Transport Committee; and the third, ironically apt, is what everyone knows all motorists do with their right foot, simply because the police seem unable to get these blinking signs to work. — Yours, etc. Jeremy Kirk, Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

Sir,—How curious that my former colleagues Steven Lukes and Richard Gombrich after all these years as Balliol Fellows should only now (Agenda, January 21) be voicing their high-minded opposition to the university conferring honours on serving politicians.

Well, I wonder, the same principled stand have been taken had, say, Tony Benn been nominated and not Mrs Thatcher?

Come on Steven, you loathe the woman and all she stands for, and all alone explains your campaign. Why not have the honesty to admit it and fight the proposed award on openly political grounds—as you and Prof Gombrich did over Blunt? Instead of wasting valuable Agenda space with such self-indulgent humping. — Yours John O'Reilly, Oxford.

Sir,—I wonder if any of your readers know when, or indeed why, customers, clients and guests in general all suddenly become "punters"?—Yours faithfully, Nicholas Pritchard, Southampton.

Well played!

Sir,—As one privileged to give evidence to another committee chaired by the then Sir John Wolfenden, I must say your otherwise excellent obituary (January 21) omits to mention a further contribution that Lord Wolfenden made to society.

After his report on vice, he was elected by this then Central Council of Physical Recreation to consider the place of sport in society. His report, published in 1968, has been the mainspring of much more enlightened attitude to sport in this country. "Man since Adam must work. But man since society has played." Such was the theme of the report. Lord Wolfenden deserves praise for emphasising that sport is a social phenomenon, not merely something for the back pages of the media. Harry Littlewood, London NW1.

When appeals fall on fuel gatherers' deaf ears

Sir,—The idea of an inquiry into the place of coal within Britain's overall energy budget is a timely one. It would be even better if it looked into the social use of fuels.

It is surprising that the Secretary of State for Energy is not eager to accept such an inquiry. His reluctance is a clear indication that his department no longer listens to the cries of pain which should be sounding through the corridors of the DHSS, and those local councils which are now in the front line in the campaign against fuel poverty.

At the beginning of December, we published an appeal against fuel poverty which was endorsed by the Bishops of Bangor, Llandaff, Oxford, and Swansea and Brecon as well as the Dean of Canterbury. Since its original publication, this appeal has received the support of at least 97 MPs.

But more significant than the action of these leaders of public opinion is the reaction which we are beginning to receive from pensioners and other victims of fuel starvation. Here, for instance, is a quotation from a letter

which we have received.

"Fuel poverty is a very good adjective to describe what most of us pensioners are suffering. I am an all-electric household, semi-detached and my house is like a 'fridge.' As I write to you my windows are frozen over and I cannot see out of them, and I dare not increase the heat because I would not be able to pay for it."

"Many pensioners spend long hours wandering round shops to keep warm, but not in Arctic weather like this because they are afraid of slipping and breaking a limb. This they should not have to do; but believe me they do. I support your efforts. Good luck in your campaign."

If the Government is unwilling to investigate this desperate situation, is it not time for the trade unions and the Churches to come together to sponsor their own inquiry? We know that there exists within the universities a large body of research work which would shock the British people if its findings were generally understood. Is it not time for the leaders of the TUC and the Churches to arrange a public inquiry which can

remove every remaining excuse for inaction?

Fuel poverty rages, while the mining areas are battling in an unprecedented dispute. The cause of this conflict is said to be overproduction of coal. Obviously no one will have ears for the complaints of the poor, either in the Department of Energy, or in the Government at large, until public opinion can be thoroughly aroused.

—Yours sincerely, Ken Coates, The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation Ltd, Matlock, Derbyshire.

Sir,—As the strike in the coalfields nears its first anniversary, the Labour Party is demonstrating, in disturbingly similar circumstances to 1926, its incapacity to provide within Parliament the leadership and support the mining communities need.

Indeed to some extent the Parliamentary Labour Party is falling even more obviously now; in 1926 Ramsay MacDonald, although clearly disliking the trade union leaders, vigorously pursued the miners' case both in Parliament and outside. The question of how a just society may be obtained

within the system of parliamentary government as it has evolved in this country is at the heart of it all. This problem has bedevilled the Labour Party throughout this century, and the huffing and puffing of today's antagonists will become just another sterile chapter unless the fundamental issues are confronted.

How will the next Labour government control the institutions of our country and ensure that they work for the good of our people as a whole? How will it ensure, for example, that our system is made to build proper housing; to provide a good education for all children; find an employment policy that provides work and eradicates the disgraceful class system within industry; give dignity to old age; and, social and physical handicaps.

On the night of the Conservative crushing defeat in 1906 Balfour, who had lost his seat as well as his prime ministry, said it was the duty of all Conservatives to ensure that their party "should still control whether in power or opposition" the destiny of our country. This negation of democracy has

been consistently and naïvely ignored by the Labour movement, and this failure has cost us dearly.

Few would question seriously Mrs Thatcher's right to appoint to a vast range of jobs those people who will pursue her policies because they actually believe in them. But in 1925 MacDonald dismissed as "subversive" a demand from his party that future Labour foreign secretaries should have around them experienced members of the Labour Party, acting in a capacity similar to the civil servants.

Again there is little evidence that the Labour Party has grasped that such an appointments system is a necessity if it really wants its policies to be implemented. The Labour leadership, instead of pursuing yet another bout of pointless argument, should promote discussion and planning within our movement to provide the parliamentary means of providing a just society. Democratic socialism must be shown to be achievable, or else we are all lost.—Yours truly, (Cllr) Tom Richardson, County Hall, Oxford.

Blight light

Sir,—Lynda Chalker's letter (January 19) about the sale of green belt land at the M25, £400 a hectare, is not to be criticised for its contents so much as for its omissions.

Very well: the land was not compulsorily purchased, but sold because the owner felt it was blighted. The important thing is that it was acquired at agricultural prices. The Department of Transport will play no part in the planning decision, but it was the DoT which advertised a "development potential" which was withdrawn after the planning authority and it has encouraged speculators. It is also selling an option intended to assist an application.

Of course the department has to dispose of surplus land at the best price. However, it is not acting entirely properly by creating expectations of vast profits from "warehousing/distribution, industrial or retail use" (to quote the original advertisement). Without the carrot the best price it could obtain is tied to green belt use. This, incidentally, would enable local authority purchases at present prices.

Mrs Chalker has pointed out the possibility of the land planning authority allowing development as an excuse for her actions. She knows full well that such a suggestion is implicitly opposed to this. In the light of this, the wonders of the Department of the Environment would be more amenable on appeal. The 42 acres would then be truly blighted.—Yours faithfully, (Cllr) T. Moran, 2 Reedham Close, Brickley Wood, Herts.

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wide range of research into epidemiology and cancer. The most effective short-term tests for carcinogens are based on fundamental research into molecular genetics. Such research is providing insights into the role of the so-called tumour promoting agents, which may be among the most important causes of differences in cancer incidence between populations. Thus a large part of our fundamental research activities are probably even more relevant to prevention than to cure or treatment.

The assertions that we have unethical links with the tobacco industry and the in-

nued to be supported by chemical companies who prefer cures to prevention are simply outrageous. For more than 20 years we have had a declared policy of not investing in any direct way in the tobacco manufacturing industry. To take into its extreme would, however, prevent us investing in banks, insurance companies, investment trusts, breweries, supermarkets, and any other organisations which have direct links with cigarette manufacturers.

We are a charity and depend wholly on donations from the public to carry out our work. It is fortunate for medical research and for our aims and goals that the public who give so generously to our activities do not take the narrow-minded and tendentious view of cancer research that is represented by your correspondent.—Yours faithfully, Walter Bodmer, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, London WC2.

at no point do they degenerate into shingle. Most consist of evenly-grey, sedimentary rock which, in the long process of moving back and forth on the seabed, has acquired a perfectly smooth surface. The pebbles, which are absolute regularity of form but are enhanced when quartz, which intruded through the original rock, is now revealed as a shining white band or line.

BRIAN CHUGG

JOHN TSO

There are fears that Britain could fail to get off the launching pad at the European Space Agency conference, warns David Whitehouse

The need to put on a spurt in the space race

NEXT week there will be the first meeting of the technical ministers of the European Space Agency (ESA) since 1977. Their decisions will set the direction of European space policy for the rest of the century. For Britain, it offers the best chance for more than a decade to revitalise its space effort. But as the minister, Geoffrey Pattie, and the British delegation take their seats in that Rome conference hall, there are many who fear that we will be the outstanding also-runs at the conference and that our poor performance will jeopardise our future prospects in space.

There are several new projects to be ratified at the meeting. The French are proposing a new more powerful version of the Ariane rocket as well as a mini-space shuttle called Hermes. Germany and the Netherlands are heading a proposal for a space platform called Columbus. This would be an unmanned or manned series of modules and platforms based on the technology that

placed the European space lab in the space shuttle's cargo bay in late 1983. But most controversial of all will be the discussion about participation in the United States space station project. All these proposals are expected to be ratified.

Once we had the lead

With this meeting comes the realisation that space science is changing. It has come of age with mature and sophisticated techniques to challenge many new frontiers. We begin to realise that space is important and that there are great economic and social benefits in being up there. Some even hold the belief that we are seeing the faltering start of the next industrial revolution that will take place in low-earth orbit. Benefits there will be, but for whom?

The European Space Agency faces a formidable challenge to become the third space community. So far man's venture into space has been dominated by the Americans and the Russians. No one could agree that it is good for humanity as a whole to have membership of the space club so exclusive. After a quarter of a century in space it falls to ESA, with possible Japanese and Australian help to take a more active role.

If ESA is to do this, it has to demand a greater contribution from its member nations so that each contributes the same proportion of its gross national product to space research as does the United States. One nation already does this. France supports its far-sighted space policies by spending five times Britain's sum of £80 million a year. From these figures it is hard to believe that Britain once had the lead in European space science. But as the Rome meeting will demonstrate, and as the respected journal Nature pointed out the major European response to space has now become continental.

But why have we been overtaken? The truth is that British administration of its space effort has not helped to develop a sensible space policy. Long-term financial and scientific plans are made via ad hoc arrangements with the Science and Engineering Research Council and the European Space Agency. Goals and strategies formulated to attain long-term advances have been lacking. And there has been the growing feeling that we need a single organisation to draw together and manage Britain in space.

The need for a British equivalent of NASA has been clear for more than 20 years. The Royal Society suggested it in 1960 and so did a panel set up by Professor Mark Richmond to look at British space science. We need a British space agency because the British stance on space is unsure. It is Government policy to perform its main civil space activities through ESA. In turn, ESA divides its activities between a basic science programme and an applications programme. All member states contribute to the first in proportion

to their gross national product. Nations contribute optionally to the second and reap benefits accordingly. The merits of such a division are arguable and the UK response is likewise bisected. Basic science is the responsibility of the Science and Engineering Research Council while responsibility for the larger applications programme is with the Department of Trade and Industry whose aim it is to see that British industry benefits. It is policy to encourage those areas where there may be the greatest commercial benefits. This has resulted in our concentration on spacecraft manufacture at which we are excellent.

We made only a minuscule contribution to Ariane, the European launcher and rival in many ways to the shuttle; someone once said we grudgingly agreed to design the ashtrays. Meanwhile, we now see Ariane beginning to pay off. This "get out what you put in" aspect of ESA's applications programme probably

makes sense as it gives control of projects to those who take the risks. This is as it should be. But the basic science situation is less than satisfactory because it is too small for any kind of sensible plan in any one science, though the ESA meeting at the end of the month is expected to increase the budget. In reality the split between basic science and applications is harmful because there is much that does not fall easily into either category.

As well as involvement with ESA, Britain has had some outstanding success in cooperation with NASA particularly in the field of astronomy but at the same time that ESA has been unable to provide a coherent programme of basic science for Europe as a whole, internal support for UK domestic space science has fallen by 75 per cent in 10 years and with it has gone the British lead in European space science.

We need a British space agency to lead from the top and view our country's contribution to the space effort over at least a 15 year timescale, longer than hitherto considered. It needs to be a full-bodied organisation able to evaluate resources, needs and benefits. What would be a disaster would be the setting up of some kind of half-hearted directorate with the job of liaising between industry, universities and the many interested parties.

The long term view

The situation is serious. We are seeing the blossoming of Earth orientated studies from space that will result in a revolution in our understanding of our planet and the under-funding of the important Hermondeux satellite ranging project that could transform geoscience — to give but two examples. A point critics sometimes miss is that money spent on space is spent on earth.

It goes into factories and universities providing salaries as people develop resources, experience and wealth. Space technology represents the apex of our society's technological expertise. It is inconceivable that Britain should not be well represented at the "high frontier."

It is an error that our country's involvement in the responsibility of no single body. Other countries realise the need for an expanding space budget as well as a coordinating space effort. What is it that they realise that we don't? Space projects take a long time, about 10 years, to come to fruition, and require scientific foresight over a decade or more. We need a space agency to oversee British activity and take the long term view. If we continue our policy of wanting involvement in other people's space projects without giving up our own, we will find ourselves in a position as also-runs at the ESA Rome meeting.

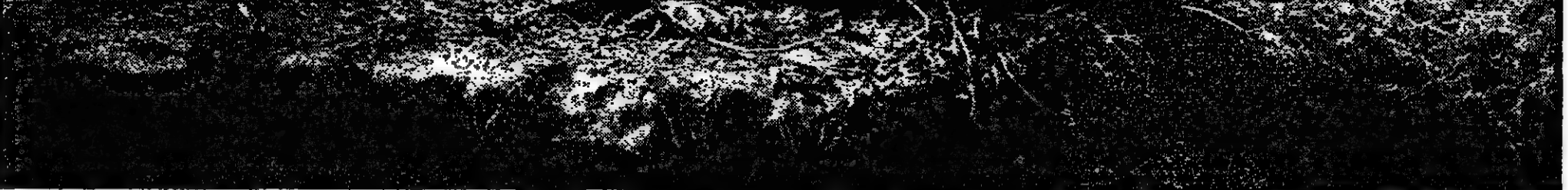
David Whitehouse is an astronomer at the Mullard Space Science Laboratory of University College, London.

When conservationists berate commercial loggers, cattle ranchers, and others for wrecking tropical forests, they are sometimes short on ideas for alternative ways to derive hard-cash benefits from the same forests. Now there appears to be a breakthrough in Papua New Guinea. In the form of two innovative types of stock raising, the creatures in question are crocodiles and butterflies, unlikely-seeming sources of income for local people.

But experience is demonstrating that there is scope to harvest a sizeable natural bounty from the forest without disrupting the ecosystems — and with direct benefit to people whose needs should count first (but are often ignored) — the people who live in it.

Crocodiles supply acceptable amounts of a commodity that, when derived from cattle, constitutes a regular item of standard agriculture: leather. For sure, the people of Papua New Guinea are not the first to take "domesticated crocodiles" compounds, especially established for the purpose: projects in India, Thailand, Zimbabwe and elsewhere have pioneered the techniques. But local tribes of Papua New Guinea are the first tropical forest people to attempt this novel way of exploiting a top-dollar type of forest wildlife.

Crocodile leather is used for an array of luxury articles, ranging from shoes to luggage to watch straps. Only a few fashion-conscious markets are involved, notably those of Paris, Rome, Frankfurt and Tokyo. Yet so great is demand, that since about 1980 suppliers have been unable to keep up with the appetites of crocodile-leather enthusiasts. "Domesticated crocodiles" have actually declined since a peak in the mid-1960s, when the main markets absorbed more than two million crocodile skins a year. But as the demand has declined through lack of demand, rather than by contraction by reason of shrinking supplies. As long as there is plenty of legitimate crocodile leather available, there are plenty of potential purchasers who will pay highly for a



SNAP SHOT: A sleeping 20ft crocodile. Picture by Christine Osborne

One way to save a threatened species might be to exploit it by farming. Norman Myers on ranching in Papua New Guinea

Save-as-you-earn with crocs of gold

Until the late 1980s, both were losing numbers drastically due to unregulated hunting of the creatures in their forest habitats. Today, the decline has been turned around, and the farming operations are helping wild stocks to build up their numbers again. As there is no longer incentive for local people to poach crocodiles in the wild.

A crocodile that is well cared for reaches a length of one metre in its first year, and becomes ready for harvest by the time it reaches two metres in its third year. Hatchlings have a food conversion rate of about 50 per cent, that is, a crocodile puts on one pound of weight for every two pounds of food consumed. (If cattle, sheep and pigs were to

achieve the same rate of growth, they would have to eat between three and five times as much food as they do.) By the time the crocodile reaches its third year, its conversion rate has fallen to about 30 per cent or less, whereupon it yields a piece of belly leather between 10 inches and 20 inches wide and 3 1/2 feet to 7 1/2 feet long, worth an average of \$150.

Not only does crocodile farming in Papua New Guinea turn wildlife protection into an economic proposition. It supplies a cash income for people who live in parts of the country where they would otherwise find it hard to gain a livelihood: swamplands and marshy zones. More important still

for long-term considerations — and as has been stressed by Dr Noel D. Vietmeyer of the National Research Council in Washington D.C., a scientist who is an ardent proponent of new ways of livestock farming in tropical forests — the strategy enables local people to earn their way by mobilising resources within their native environments. After all, crocodile farming by contrast with conventional stock husbandry, requires no forest clearing, grass planting, fence building and pesticide spraying that are essential, not to say expensive, factors in the raising of cattle and sheep.

There is much mileage in butterflies. The plant-looking specimen is worth half a dollar, and a run-of-the-mill creature can readily bring \$10. A specimen of a rarer species, such as the mauve swallowtail, sells on international markets for \$50, while a specimen of a brilliantly coloured, and particularly rare, birdwing species can be worth up to \$1,000. Because of their resplendent appearance, butterflies are sold mainly for decorative purposes. Many species are enriched with "structural" colours, which cause their wings to flash iridescently in the sun as they "blend" the light they reflect. When these gorgeous specimens are mounted in glass or plastic, they serve to adorn trays, tablecloths and screens, even bar-counter coasters and

being attempted in Papua New Guinea: butterfly farming. In various parts of the country, at least 500 villages are rearing butterflies in captivity, or harvesting them in the wild. Both of these approaches are handled in such a way that they constitute a sustainable use of a uniquely valuable resource. The same villagers also seek to exploit beetles and other insects for export to the extent that the government now views all insects as a national resource, and Papua New Guinea has become the only nation in the world to specify insect conservation as a constitutional objective.

The worst placed of all, the Queen Alexandra's birdwing, being the largest and one of the most spectacular butterflies on earth, is limited to one small sector of Papua New Guinea; worse still, the species' lifestyle makes it unusually vulnerable, on the grounds that, during its caterpillar stage, it feeds on only one species of forest plant, and most of its forest habitat is being degraded if not destroyed through sundry exploitations. Fortunately, the attention of local villagers is helping this particular birdwing slowly to recover its numbers.

Dr Norman Myers is a consultant in environment and development.

When it's downhill all the way

Peter J Smith on the mechanics of the avalanche

THE popular image of erosion, not entirely dispelled by textbooks, is one of gentle-slopes. Huge mountain ranges are pushed up at an imperceptible rate of a few centimetres a year, or longer, and the elements immediately begin to wear them down again. As the surface rocks gradually weather into agriculture while some of the streams carry them down to the oceans almost grain by grain until the mountains exist no more.

But it's not always quite like that, as dwellers in the foothills know only too well. After a visit to the Alps in the 1780s, the Swiss naturalist Horace de Saussure wrote: "a most extraordinary danger encountered sometimes on that route is one of being surprised by torrents which form suddenly and descend with incredible violence from the height of the mountains."

Moreover, the dangers are increasing, not only because more people are getting in the way but because they are also removing natural defences. Millions of tonnes of debris are piled up on land, and pressures on land grow, developing countries are removing stabilising vegetation in favour of marginal agriculture while some of the developed countries are expanding forestry and recreational activities to ever higher levels. The result in each case can be greater instability. Debris flows may be natural, but they are not adverse to a helping hand.

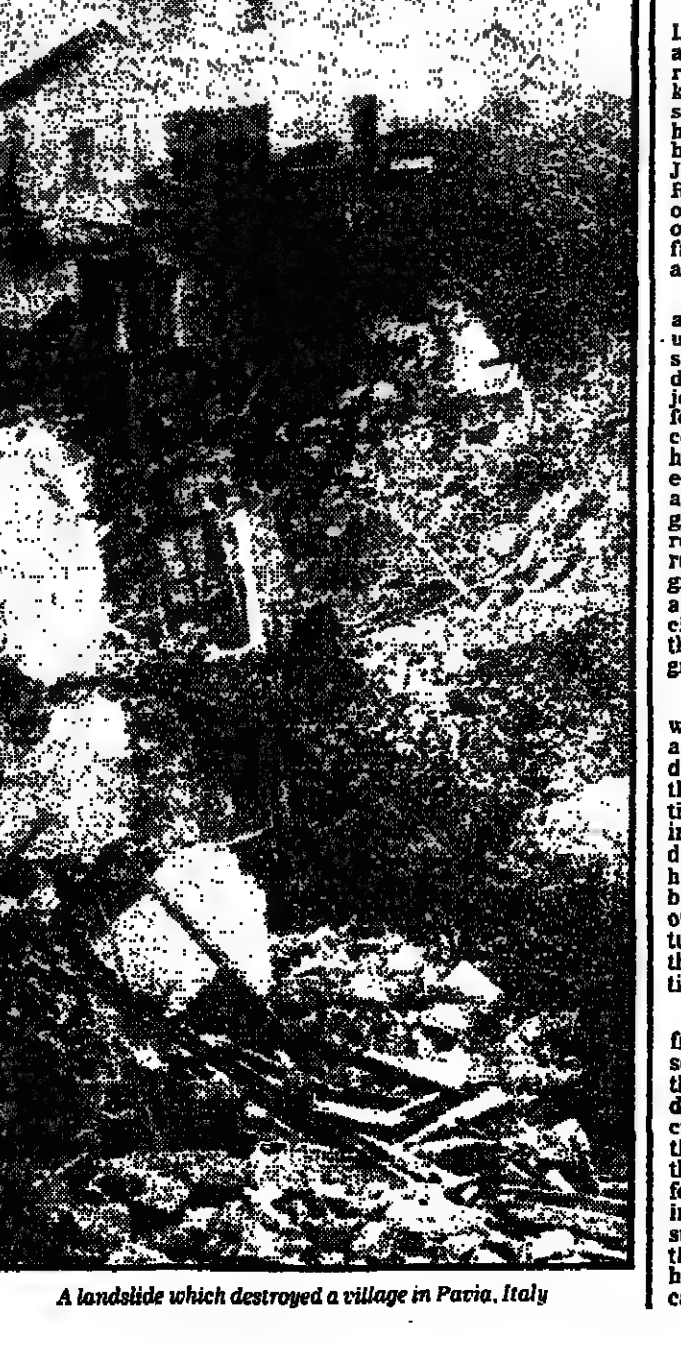
The trouble is that they don't offer much help in return, and least of all to investigators. The occurrence of debris flows depends so much on the precise configuration of the local geology that it's almost impossible to forecast, not to mention the vagaries of behaviour. There has to be debris available, there has to be a gorge down which it can flow, and there has to be a trigger (e.g. a rainstorm or earthquake) to set the process in motion; but as mountains have all three, that's not saying much.

It's certainly not saying enough to provide an ability to predict just when and where debris flows will occur, even without the most cautious danger zones of western Europe and Japan that have been under observation for more than a century. The best that can be done is simply to identify those broad types of geological environment likely to be most susceptible to debris flows and then take what few precautionary measures there are.

The three most vulnerable mountain terrains are those that have not been glaciated for millions of years, those from which glaciers have retreated fairly recently and those adjacent to existing glaciers. In other words, practically everywhere is at risk, but for different reasons.

On regions long unglaciated, the elements have played for such a length of time that soil and fragmented rock often extends to considerable depth. In short, near-surface debris is abundant. Where glaciers have recently retreated they will have deposited their load of accumulated rocks in haphazard patterns and debris will again be freely available. But if the glacier remains, the hazard is, if anything, even greater. For the burst of water from a hitherto ice-dammed or rock-dammed glacial lake is just the sort of trigger needed to set a debris flow in motion. That's what happened at Huairaz.

A fourth type of danger zone is the lower reaches of a volcanic edifice which, even if the volcano itself is dormant or extinct, provides a ready-made supply of rubble and ash all too prone to slide under suitably wet conditions. Finally, there is one environment in which the problem arises less from debris than from the bedrock itself. Certain types of fine sedimentary and metamorphic basement rocks on steep slopes are only too ready to sag and slide catastrophically when they become saturated enough.



A landslide which destroyed a village in Paria, Italy

Malcolm Smith tells the bald truth

Rat's whiskers

IF you're bald or worried about hair loss, look kindly on rats. Studies using rat whiskers may one day yield a successful technique for human hair replacement, because biologists Colin Jahoda, Kenneth Horne and Roy Oliver, at the University of Dundee, have found a way to coax rat hair to grow from unproductive follicles in a rat's snout.

It wasn't until the 1970s that another biologist at the same university discovered that a special type of skin cell — a dermal papilla — which projects into the base of the hair follicle deep inside the skin, controls the production of the hair inside it. The papilla is essential for the initiation and maintenance of hair growth. What the current research has done is to remove these special cells, grow them in tissue cultures and return them to hair follicles where they still retain their ability to stimulate hair growth.

Trials used rat hair follicles which had been partly cut away, removing the hair, the dermal papilla and much of the follicle itself. When tissue-cultured papillae were introduced to these hairless, damaged follicles, more than half of them sprouted full-blown whiskers again. Not only this but the hair structure and the cells comprising the new hair follicle all functioned perfectly.

Only a few years ago, cells from the hair follicles themselves were first cultured in the laboratory. Now that the dermal papillae can also be cultured, researchers can for the first time investigate how the papillae cells induce the follicle cells to produce hair in the first place. Hormones such as testosterone influence the process but no-one knows how; the common and genetically determined pattern



Bald answers?

Dr Peter J. Smith is editor of Open Earth and scientific editor of Geology Today.

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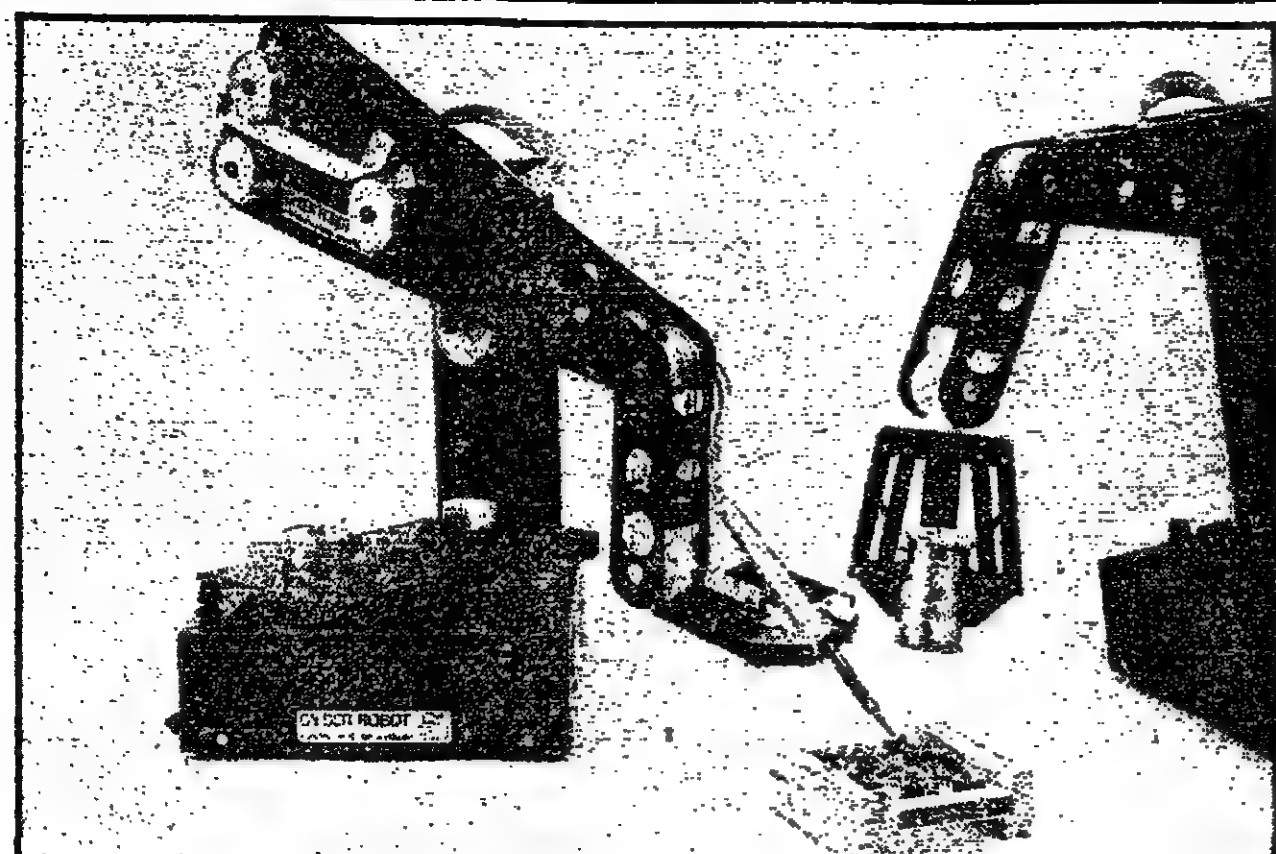
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Robot vision: slow progress



Teaching a robot to see has been one of the trickiest feats of all. Bob Beattie explains the problems and the developments

How to see through a robot

IN the early days of Artificial Intelligence during the late 1950s, it was thought that the problem of programming a robot to see using a television camera wouldn't be too difficult — maybe it would take five years, ten at the outside. Even in a field given to optimistic predictions, this turned out to be one of the most outrageous. However, at last it seems that progress is being made on outlining the basic principles of general-purpose computer vision systems, but it's clear we'll not be able to bolt them on to our industrial robots for another decade or two.

This state of affairs presents a problem to roboticists because the outstanding difficulty in applying automation to a wider range of tasks lies in giving the robot controller some means of acquiring information about its environment. The paint-spraying robot which gives the car a nice paint job when something goes wrong with its workpiece delivery system is just one example of how a lack of sensory data prevents a robot from being able to respond intelligently to unexpected events or to variations in its task.

Driven by this need for effective sensory systems but appreciating the difficulty of general-purpose solutions, researchers in robot vision have turned their attention to

building systems which perform usefully in some limited domain. On this basis most vision system work can be classified as theory-oriented or applications-oriented depending on whether the goal is a general-purpose system or one designed to perform a certain limited range of tasks. Currently, only the applications-oriented systems are suitable for use in industry.

Industrial vision systems usually go through a two-stage cycle. In the first, they are taught something about the task to be performed in the second, working stage. Teaching usually consists of showing the system examples of objects to be recognised later, or examples of acceptable and unacceptable objects if the system is to be used for inspection.

The simplest type of applications-oriented systems are the binary or silhouette vision systems, and these have been commercially available for several years. They depend on the whole object to be recognised being darker or brighter than the background.

In the teach phase, various parameters of each of the objects to be recognised, such as area, ratio of perimeter to area, etc. are stored.

In the working phase, the same parameters are extracted from the unknown

object in the scene and compared with those previously stored. The best match enables the unknown object to be recognised, and by performing calculations on its parameters its position and orientation can be computed.

As long as the object silhouette is obtained accurately, binary vision systems are fast and cheap. Unfortunately they suffer from two severe problems. Most inspection and recognition tasks involve taking internal detail of the object into account. This is clearly not possible when the system is based on silhouettes. A more practical problem is the sensitivity of binary vision systems to changes in the ambient light.

One, possibly apocryphal, story concerns a research team in an industrial company who were building a binary vision system. After weeks of slaving over hot visual display units, they finally got the system working, so they invited the managing director for a demonstration. As soon as he walked into the lab the system failed.

To make matters more exasperating, the system started working again as soon as he left. Some time later the team discovered that their system couldn't handle the extra light reflected onto the workstation by the director's white shirt.

Reliability problems have led to work on producing more robust systems. One approach is to use many intensively valued, instead of just two as in the binary case. Such systems have a first processing stage which involves finding lines in the image, since these usually correspond to external and internal edges of the viewed objects. As with the binary system a pattern of lines is stored for each different object during the teaching phase, and used as a basis for recognition or inspection during the working phase.

While more widely applicable and robust than binary vision systems, these so-called greyscale systems suffer from the fact that it is very difficult to recover any of the three-dimensional properties of an object from a single image. In effect, these systems recognise views of objects rather than objects themselves. This severely limits the range of jobs they can do.

Consequently, much current research is concerned with obtaining three dimensional object information directly. The most popular technique is to use some kind of active triangulation ranging. For instance, by projecting a stripe of light onto the scene and finding it in the corresponding image, which is easy because it should be brighter than anything else,

the shape of the object surface can be worked out from the shape of the light stripe in the image. One important application for which these systems have been found to be particularly useful is continuous seam welding. The welding head, which has a small solid-state camera and a laser-based stripe generator built in, is attached to a robot arm. By examining the stripe position in the image, the weld can be determined and appropriate action taken by the system controller to produce an optimal weld.

British research in vision is now being encouraged by the Alvey Directorate, set up by the Government to coordinate research and development in Advanced Information Technology. To balance the need for immediate advances leading to saleable products with the need more fundamental research, both applications-orientated and theory-orientated vision is being supported. Driven by such a strategy, this field of work should lead to practically useful systems in the short term, and eventually to a substantially increased understanding of how the human visual system works.

R. J. Beattie lectures in the department of electrical and electronic engineering at Napier College, Edinburgh.

Jack Schofield takes chip architecture to bits

When the chips are down

WHEN you turn on a micro, it is impossible to tell what chip is at its heart. Is the cpu (central processing unit) a MOS6502, say, or a Zilog Z80, Intel 8088 or Motorola 68000? And if you can't tell is there any reason to care?

Of course there is. If you sit in the driver's seat of a car and turn on the ignition, it may be impossible to tell what kind of engine is under the bonnet. However, once you have put the car in gear and driven for an hour or two, you will certainly appreciate the difference between a two-cylinder 500cc engine, a 12-valve job or something like a V12 racing car engine.

Similar differences exist between the Sinclair Spectrum (battery-assisted pedal tricycle), IBM PC (Escort) and Acorn 32016 (Porsche).

Understanding the power of a chip is hard, like understanding an internal combustion engine. With a car, a rough guide is given by counting the number of cylinders, the cubic capacity of the engine (cc) and so on. With a microchip, similar indicators are the number of bits of information it can process at once, its capacity — the amount of memory it can use — and its clock speed or cycle time in megahertz (MHz).

Thus we talk about 8-bit, 16-bit and 32-bit chips that can address 64K or 1 megabyte (Mbyte) or 16Mbytes of memory, and run at 2 or 4.77 or 12MHz. The figures give some idea of the potential power.

Of course, as with car engines, the chips that drive microcomputers may perform better or worse than expected. Also, the performance depends on the load factor. An 8-bit chip may do something simple like word processing, while a powerful 32-bit chip is reduced to a crawl by complex high-resolution graphics. Nevertheless, in general, the more "bits" and the more address space a chip has, and the faster it runs, the better.

These things are often indicated in the chip's name. The Intel 4004, the first-ever microprocessor, and National Semiconductor's 32016 are examples.

Intel's 4004 and 8008 were primitive chips designed for use in programmable calculators. However, they were soon followed by the first true microcomputer chip, the Intel 8080. This was used in the world's first "best-selling" microchip, the Altair, which was so successful that its system of construction was adopted by much of the rest of the industry. As the S-100 bus it is still in widespread use today.

The disc-operating system written for the 8080A was called CP/M, and again, this is still an industry standard 10 years later.

Now the 8088A had an 8-bit internal architecture, which meant it could process 8-bits or one byte of data at a time. It had an 8-bit data bus, which meant it could fetch one byte of data at a time. It had a 16-bit address bus, which meant it could address 2¹⁶ (two to the power of 16) or 65,536 bytes of memory. In common parlance, that's 64K. Finally, it ran at 2MHz.

Actually the 8088A was a real mess, in hardware terms, and people saw immediately how they could improve on it. One group left Intel to found Zilog, and in 1977 produced the Z-80 chip. This was a huge success, and is still used in the Sinclair Spectrum, Amstrad, Enterprise, Tatung Einstein, and many other micros.

Alphanumeric characters

In 1977 the Z-80's major rival was the MOS6502, which is used in the Acorn BBC and Electron, Atari 800XL, 65XE and 130XE, Apple IIe and IIc, Commodore 16, 64, 128 and Plus/4, Oric Atmos and other micros.

The Z-80's success was partly due to the fact that it was written to run the same programs as the original 8080A, including CP/M. The 6502's major disadvantage has always been its lack of a standard operating system, and the inability to run CP/M.

But both the Z-80 and 6502 are 8-bit chips which can directly address only 64K of memory. Obviously it would be better to process more than 8-bits of data at a time, and to be able to utilise more memory, so 16-bit chips were soon on the way. The first success was the Intel 8088, used in the IBM PC and most of its emulators.

The Intel 8088 has a 16-bit internal design, and it can address 1Mbyte of memory. However, it still has an 8-bit data bus, which means it must fetch data 8 bits at a time. Obviously this slows it down a lot. However, when the IBM PC came out at the end of 1981, there were few 16-bit support chips available, while 8-bit chips were plentiful and cheap. It thus made sense to go for economy rather than optimum performance.

Nowadays most serious micros use the Intel 8086 chip instead. This has the same internal construction, so it can run the same programs, but it has a proper 16-bit data

bus. Examples are the ACT Apricot and Olivetti M-24.

Some newer micros use even more advanced versions of this same chip. For example, Research Machines' brilliant new Nimbus uses the 80188, and IBM's own advanced AT model uses the 80286. Both can run 8086 code.

The main rival to the 8088 family is the powerful Motorola 68000. This has a 32-bit internal architecture, and can address 16Mbytes of memory. It is used mainly in multi-user, multi-tasking supermicros such as the IMP-88, Stride, TDI Pinnacle, Torch, WICAT and similar models. Apple's Macintosh and "Fat Mac", and Atari's 1302T and 520ST (both with 128K and 512K of RAM respectively) also use 68000s.

A cut-down version called the 68008 is used in the Sinclair QL. This has the full 68000 internal architecture, but only an 8-bit data path. This enables cheap support chips to be used. However, the fact that the 32-bit cpu has to fetch data only 8-bits at a time undoubtedly slugs its performance.

An advanced version of the chip, the 68020, will soon be available. This has a 32-bit data bus, and it can address an amazing 4 gigabytes (thousand million bytes) of memory. Where the Z-80 runs at 2.5 or 4MHz, the 8088 runs at 4.77MHz, the 68020 can run up to 15.67MHz, and so performance many more operations per second — around 2.5 million instructions (mips), in fact.

A 68020-based micro will be able to provide something like 97 per cent of the power of a mainframe computer at the same 3 per cent of the cost. And you could have one on your desk within the next two or three years.

Of course for most purposes an 8-bit micro is perfectly adequate. When word processing, for example, you are moving around 7-bit numbers that stand for alphanumeric characters. There's no obvious advantage in using a 32-bit architecture to do that.

Also, the superior chip's advantages may not be fully exploited by the software or hardware. For example, the 80586 in the IBM PCAT may address masses of RAM, but (1) there's only room for 3Mbytes in the box and (2) the operating system can only use 640K of it anyway.

However, today's new chips certainly have the potential to offer far more power, and it helps if you understand why. It's the only way not to get taken in by the advertising.

LETTERS:

The Sellafeld risk assessment

Sir — Dr Jones, (Futures, December 27; Letters, January 10), raises a number of points, about the evidence prepared by the National Radiological Protection Board for the Black Advisory Group, which need some clarification.

In the board's main study, average radiation doses to young persons in the population were calculated for natural background, medical exposure, nuclear weapons fallout, and the operations at the Sellafeld nuclear fuel reprocessing plant.

The doses from the plant's operations arise from inhalation of radionuclides by the public and ingestion as well as from external radiation. We calculated that these doses to the bone marrow of young persons was on average about 10 per cent of the total dose.

We were aware that certain individuals would receive higher doses. We therefore examined how a wide range of factors could influence doses to individual children.

Many of the factors would have been expected to influence doses only to a few children, and during a short period. We considered only the dose resulting from the discharge; those from all other sources would have been much the same as for others in the population.

Dr Jones quotes us as using a "beach residence time" of 25 hours per year. He ignores the fact that we used this only for the average one-year-old, with values rising to 100 hours per year — the value which he proposes for 10-year-olds.

Inadvertent ingestion of sand was related to beach occupancy. A range of 75 to 500 hours per year was used for extreme cases. The analysis showed that these increases over the average time spent on the beach raised the total dose from the discharge by about 10 per cent. The total dose from all sources of radiation would therefore be increased by about 1 per cent.

In the extreme case of children exhibiting pica and eating large amounts of silt not sand, the dose to individuals from the discharge would be significantly increased, possibly by up to a factor of 100 above average. This factor relates to the total from the discharge, not from all sources.

However, the amounts of silt that would need to be swallowed to give this increase in dose are large (200 grammes per day for half the year); the material is not widespread on the Seaseale beach; and the condition would not occur throughout life.

For the child with such a high intake of silt for a few years, the total radiation dose to age 20, from all sources,



might be increased by a factor of two or three. In fact, the extreme case of pica envisaged for the calculation would be considered a medical condition and would require treatment. It would certainly apply only to a few children.

Because of this, and because there is little silt on the beach near Seaseale, where children play, intakes of silt were not included in the calculations for the average child.

In radiological protection it is considered prudent to assume a linear, no-threshold relationship between radiation dose and risk for "high" particles, and this may slightly overestimate the risk for "low LET radiation," such as gamma rays.

This NRPB approach reflects the international consensus. However, when the board's research has shown that the risk is greater than the consensus indicates, it has published this research and advised Government bodies accordingly.

The board was set up by Parliament basically to carry out research and to provide advice. It is not a regulatory body. The controlling departments for discharges from Sellafeld are the Department of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, acting jointly. In Dr Jones's article this brief statement is notably absent.

In its work for the Black Advisory Group, the NRPB considered the leukaemia risk to the foetus as a separate case, and concluded that it was about six times the adult value assumed by the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

There is no evidence to support the statement that alpha emitters such as plutonium

are bone-seeking elements selectively concentrated in foetal tissue during early pregnancy. In general, the radiation dose to the bone marrow comes mainly from naturally occurring radioactive bone-seekers.

The Board's Report includes a table summarising the doses from man-made and artificial sources to the bone marrow of children living in Seaseale; by far the greatest radiation dose comes from nature.

The board's assessment is based on published scientific documentation. If the observed leukaemia incidence were due to Sellafeld discharges, our assessment would have to be 400 times wrong. The claim that this is the case is not substantiated. And if radiation had been the cause of the leukaemias at Seaseale, the incidence of leukaemia throughout the country would be far greater. — Yours sincerely, (Dr) K. H. Clarke, National Radiological Protection Board, Chilton Didcot, Oxon.

Must do better

Sir — Reading New Tricks From The Old Dogs (Futures, Jan. 3), it occurred to me that a logical paradox shows, if nothing else, that the theory of morphic resonance cannot be tested in the manner suggested.

The theory states that the more an event takes place the easier it is for such an event to take place. This being so, we would expect that the more we test the theory itself, the more likely we are to get favourable results. But this would be the case irrespective of the results of the individual tests. Thus, we can conceive of a situation where the individual tests show negative

results but the overall result is positive — clearly a contradiction.

The unsatisfactory American test leads to another difficulty. The poor result of this test is explained by the auxiliary hypothesis of the presence of a negating influence, such as time zones. But if the theory is correct then we can expect, with more American tests, not only an increased level of success, but also, an increased level of negating influence on the tests, thus preventing a favourable result. It seems that the tests, as presently conceived, cannot be successful if the theory is itself successful.

It is probable that no theory can be successfully verified or falsified but morphic resonance, in its present form, seems to be expressly stated to avoid both.

John Goodwin, History of Science, Kingston Polytechnic.

Brains test

Sir — Martin Ross (Futures, January 10) asks what machines can improve themselves, and whether even the human brain can do so.

The human brain does, in at least one sense, improve itself. This property has been described as that of self-structuring, and it seems to be one of the necessary characteristics of systems which discover new meanings and solve new problems. The discovery process in humans has been given various names — insight learning, experiential learning, and creativity being among them.

Not only does the human brain "improve itself," but it creates the world in which it finds itself. I think it was Whitehead who pointed out the achievements in the 19th century arising from the human invention of the invention process.

Social systems (organisations, cultures etc) have the potential for self-structuring, thereby "improving" themselves. As for machines — I can anticipate a juicy debate beginning "it all depends what you mean by improving." Some of the issues raised have kept philosophers happy — or at least occupied — for a long time. My own touchstone is to beware of those who talk with absolute certainty on such matters.

Martin Ross, like the rest of us, should keep asking such questions and trying to find more satisfactory answers. For that is as good a demonstration as I can think of, of the self-structuring process.

Dr Tudor Richards, Manchester Business School

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Quick thinking under pressure, combined with planning and management skills are essential for young fast-moving position with the leading toy company, Hasbro Industries (UK) Ltd. Send full cv to Frances Waterworth, PER, 20 The Butts Centre, Reading, Berks RG1 7QB. Tel: (0734) 595666.

Opportunities in Oxon

Nexand Ltd design, manufacture and develop a wide range of accessories for electron microscopes. Selling mainly to company research divisions and university research groups, the company in five years has reported a phenomenal growth rate.

Sales Manager

Five figure salary
Responsible for network of UK and overseas agents. Proven sales ability and technical background essential. Experience in cryogenics/vacuum technology/electron optics high value sales necessary.

Technical Sales Co-ordinator

Attractive negotiable salary
Required to set up and run a smooth operations system. Highly technical background and organised approach essential to co-ordinate the passage of orders from initial receipt to shipping.

Project Manager

To £15,000
Responsible for projects from design stage. Overseeing mechanical/vacuum test engineers and design team. Four/five years' experience in disciplines outlined above or in physics, semi-conductors or electron microscopy. Ph.D in physics ideal.

Mechanical Design Engineer

Attractive negotiable salary
To work with development group preparing designs for high precision work. Five years' similar experience and degree/HNC in mechanical engineering ideal. Excellent package available with all positions. Send full cv today to Nena Kelly, PER, 20 The Butts Centre, Reading, RG1 7QB.

Technical Manager

Microwave Products Devon/ Cornwall
Excellent young company with semi-monopolistic product range well established in European markets offers Director Designate appointment to highly motivated, professional Electronics Engineer with upper frequency experience: a prime mover in imminent expansion and acquisition programme in the USA. Exceptional, highly negotiable package. Send full cv to Mike Trembath, PER, 1st Floor, Cobourg House, Mayflower Street, Plymouth PL1 1SG.

Technical Chemist

Competitive salary Colne, Lancs
Very successful manufacturing company renowned for high quality products seeks talented, well qualified, young Technical Chemist with background in moulding, knowledge of adhesives and resins and experience of environmental testing. Knowledge of foams, including polyurethanes and styrenes, an advantage. Very attractive package and genuine prospects for further professional growth. Send full cv, stating salary requirements, to Cathy Homer, PER, Victoria House, Ormskirk Road, Preston PR1 2DX. Tel: (0772) 59743.

Electrical/Electronic Systems Engineer

£9,500 Hartlepool
Based in Hartlepool, British Steel have the most modern welded pipe mill in Europe using the latest process control techniques to produce high quality pipe from 7 1/4" to 20" in diameter. To continue the development of the process in order to maintain market leadership, they wish to appoint an Electrical/Electronic Systems Engineer whose role will be to provide technical back-up to the maintenance team. The job offers challenging and interesting work with the satisfaction of progressing projects from concept to commissioning. Applicants should have a sound knowledge of thyristor drives, analogue and digital electronics, programmable controllers and microprocessors. Qualified to HNC or equivalent level you will need to be creative, energetic and self-motivated. Starting salary will be £9,500 with additional payment for any overtime. The attractive benefits include a superannuation scheme and attractive relocation assistance if appropriate. There is real scope for further advancement through a comprehensive management development scheme. Send full cv to Harry Alliker, PER, Northampton House, 177 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1LA.

Systems Analyst

Five figure salary Nottinghamshire
An excellent opportunity has arisen for an experienced Systems Analyst to join a well established and highly successful manufacturing company currently employing about 1,000 people. Reporting to the DP/Systems Manager, your main responsibility will be to work in conjunction with user departments to study, develop, program, test and implement new computer systems. Specifically, you will investigate existing clerical or mechanical methods and develop new systems to provide management information. In addition you will investigate problems and prepare feasibility reports for management recommending alternative cost-effective solutions. The present installation is a mainframe ICL 2950. Applicants will have worked in a manufacturing environment and should essentially have a sound working knowledge of mainframe computers, preferably on ICL. Experience of O & M techniques would be advantageous but not essential. An attractive five figure salary will be offered with the prospect of advancement to a senior post. Additional benefits will include contributory pension, life assurance, cover and a generous relocation package. Send full cv to Brett Hanson, PER, Lambert House East, Clarendon Street, Nottingham NG1 5NS.

If you would like to receive regular, weekly information on vacancies in the fields of Science and Technology, complete this coupon and send it to PER, Moorfoot, The Moor, Sheffield S1 4PO, or ring (0742) 704383.

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Salary required:
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Each minute of the day, each day of the year, there are Ferranti ship control systems maintaining a constant vigilance over the oceans of the world.

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This is all made possible by Ferranti's state-of-the-art real-time software.

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PROGRAMMERS to experienced ANALYSTS and CONSULTANTS - with a degree in a numerate discipline and/or experience in any of the following:

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As you would expect from an internationally successful company, the rewards packages will be very competitive. They include, where appropriate, comprehensive relocation to the Bracknell, Fareham or Weymouth areas.

So, if you're a software specialist keen to exploit the frontiers of software at sea, make sure you speak to Ferranti first.

Call our Recruitment Section on Bracknell 483232, Ext. 3471.

Or write with details to: Recruitment Section, Ferranti Computer Systems Ltd., Western Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1RA.

Please quote reference B/NSD/G

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It offers the opportunity to study modern mathematical methods of system specification and design, techniques of program development and validation, and the application of these methods to industrially relevant projects, including hardware and microprocessor applications.

Financial support for candidates is available from SERC and from industrial bursaries provided by major UK companies including BP, GEC, and ICL.

For more information about the course, the work of the group, or the bursaries, write to: Professor C. A. R. Hoare, F.R.S., Oxford University Programming Research Group, 8-11 Keble Road, Oxford OX1 3GD.

LEGAL ADVISER NEWLY QUALIFIED SOLICITOR

A long-established, successful, expanding, international, medium-sized English public company in an attractive part of S.E. England, seeks a young Solicitor to join the legal team, reporting to the Legal Director (a Solicitor).

The main emphasis will be on litigation but there will be general commercial practice in the law affecting contracts, company acquisitions, consumer protection, employment and conveyancing.

Initially the role will be in the UK only, but some overseas involvement is possible in due course. Terms will include a good salary, company car, pension, share participation scheme, etc. We seek a strictly non-"ivory tower" person who will relate easily with the commercial managers concerned, and will wish to develop an understanding of the company's activities as well as all-round experience in commercial legal practice.

C.V. please (which will be treated in absolute confidence) addressed to Legal Director, Felcourt, near East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 2JY.

Project Leaders · Software Designers · Software Support

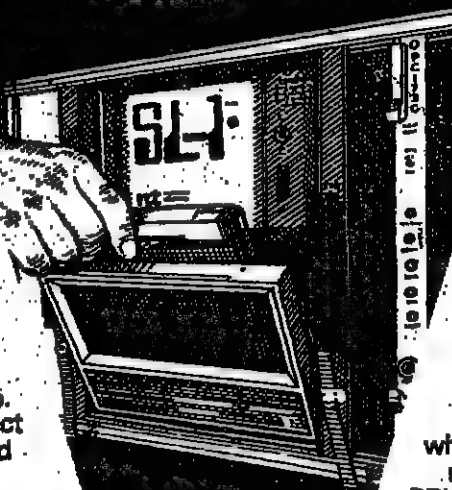
INTERNATIONAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

Northern Telecom Limited is a leader in telecommunications technology and the largest producer of fully digital switching and transmission systems in the world. The SL-1 fully digital PBX is already the world's top seller with nearly 3.5 million lines in service in 42 countries. In maintaining this technological lead we are taking a major initiative: developing new concepts for the SL-1 on an international scale from our Maidenhead base. We are therefore looking for Project Leaders, Software Designers and Software Support Engineers.

PROJECT LEADERS & SOFTWARE DESIGNERS

In implementing this strategy your role will be crucial, developing new designs and enhancements, preparing documentation and ensuring that these major programmes come to fruition on time and to cost. For Project Leaders and Software Designers with at least three to five years' experience in real-time or computer controlled telephone switching systems, these are excellent opportunities on the ground floor of a new venture in software architecture. A degree in electronic engineering, computer science or a related discipline is essential, and an understanding of SL-1 would be an advantage.

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SOFTWARE SUPPORT ENGINEER

As one of a small, highly skilled team responsible for supplying software expertise within the European Technical Support Group, your responsibilities will cover post-sales support to SL-1 customers throughout Europe and the Middle East. Some travel may be involved.

You must have at least five years' software experience in real-time or computer-controlled telephone switching systems, at least two of which should have been in a support role. Systems knowledge of digital PBXs, for example, hardware and software operations, would be an advantage.

Northern Telecom operates a comprehensive salary plan which rewards and recognises an individual contribution to the company. The negotiable salaries are highly attractive, full training will be provided and an extensive benefits package includes generous assistance with relocation costs.

To find out more, please telephone or send your CV to Colin Luker, Recruitment Manager, Northern Telecom plc, Langton House, Market Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8BE. Telephone Maidenhead (0628) 35031.

FOR THE SL-1



BRITISH AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

PROMOTIONS OFFICER

The Amateur Athletic Association and the British Amateur Athletic Board require a Promotions Officer. This is a FULL-TIME appointment.

The person appointed will be responsible for all aspects of the BAAB/AAA promotions in an executive role. The person shall have a thorough knowledge of the sport plus work experience of organising international events and be capable of liaising with sponsors and the media at the highest level.

The salary is in the region of £20,000 p.a. negotiable. Post to commence 1st April, 1985, or earlier.

Application forms and further information from: BAAB/AAA, Francis House, Francis Street, London, SW1P 1DL.



Trainee Programmer/Analyst

£6,264-£8,712

One of the largest users of Information Technology in the South-west is seeking a young graduate of exceptional ability to train as an Analyst/Programmer.

An ambitious programme for the development of information systems and office systems technology is under way and you will, after initial training, be expected to play a key role in the implementation of a county-wide development programme based on office automation hardware and software.

Excellent career prospects, flexible working hours, contributory pension scheme, staff restaurant and social club are amongst the benefits provided.

Application form from the County Treasurer, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 4QJ. Tel (0392) 77977 ext 2472, returnable by 6th February, 1985.

DEVON



Engineering Software Development and Technical Consultancy

Mathematicians/Engineers/Scientists

SW LONDON

up to £11,014

The Mathematics and Computing Division of the London Research Station is the main centre for the development and support of technical software for engineers working on a wide range of gas-industry projects.

We are now recruiting high-calibre mathematicians, scientists, engineers and computer specialists for challenging work in software development and technical consultancy. In particular we are looking for people skilled in one or more of the following areas: numerical analysis, optimisation methods, time series analysis, mathematical modelling and computer graphics.

Successful applicants will work on projects such as on-line monitoring and optimal control of the Corporation's national transmission system, simulation of oil and gas fields, modelling large gas networks and digital mapping.

Candidates should possess a good honours degree in a numerate discipline and have the ability to apply modern theoretical techniques to practical problems. You should enjoy writing computer software to solve engineering problems, and experience of using FORTRAN would be an advantage.

Starting salary will be within the range £7,791 to £11,014. Benefits are those normally associated with a large progressive organisation.

Please write for an application form, [quoting reference LRS/345/G], to: Personnel Officer (Fulham), British Gas, London Research Station, Michael Road, London SW6 2AD.

BRITISH GAS

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS IN COMMUNICATION ENGINEERING

Two Research Fellowships are required in the above Department to undertake experimental and theoretical work leading to the construction of a computer-based model of short range VHF propagation in cluttered environments. Applicants should have experience in one or more of the following areas: (1) measurement techniques, data logging, antenna design, electromagnetic wave propagation and scattering theory, computer-based simulation and modelling. The posts are tenable for up to two years from 1.1.86 and are funded by the MRC. Salary on the Research Fellow 1A scale £7,520-£12,150 plus superannuation. For further particulars please 021-472 1301 ext. 2559, quoting reference SA. No formal application form. Three copies of application, including full Curriculum Vitae and naming three referees to Assistant Registrar (Science and Engineering), P.O. Box 365, Birmingham B15 2TT by 1 February 1985.

ARTICLED CLERK WANTED

Interest in personal injury compensation work for plaintiffs necessary.

Apply in writing to John Pickering, 9 Church Lane, Oldham OL1 3AN.

BIOSCIENCE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

U.S. instrument manufacturer opening European sales office in London area seeks representative with Biology or Life Science background. Company paid travel to European customers. Ability to speak French and/or German desirable. Salary commensurate with ability and experience. Interested persons should send CV to: Sales Manager, 74 Grandview Avenue, Wallingford, Ct. 06492, USA.

GRADUATES

If you have a University Degree, some work experience, live in or near London, and are over 25, but so far feel you have not achieved the earnings or career satisfaction you deserve, we have vacancies for good communicators with outgoing personalities who want to consider a new career. First year earnings up to £12,000 p.a. to those who enjoy talking and mixing with people.

Telephone Linda Miller on 01-837 7112

Computing Opportunities

The maintenance of scientific advancement and innovation in the Universities and Polytechnics of the UK needs the strongest possible computing support. As part of the Science and Engineering Research Council, the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL) provides this support through large scale computing services and coordination of computing research programmes. There is a large IBM-compatible mainframe complex and a number of VAX (VMS and UNIX), GEC PRIME and PERQ computers.

The RAL Central Computing Division requires computer scientists, systems and applications programmers. The RAL Informatics Division requires staff to support the Government's new advanced technology initiative, the Alvey programme, and contribute towards the provision and development of the Alvey Infrastructure, including UNIX development on GEC Series 63 and SYSTIME VAX 11/750 systems.

VACANCIES EXIST FOR SINGLE USER SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMERS

SERC has set up a Common Base Programme to provide a highly integrated scientific/engineering single user workstation environment for its research community, based on interconnected heterogeneous systems such as the ICL PERQ. These offer a high resolution, high speed graphic display, tablet/mouse, large local filestore, powerful cpu, fast local area network, and X25 WAN connections. Software currently provided includes UNIX, P77 and Pascal compilers, a GKS graphics package, communications, and high quality program and document development tools.

The aim of the project is to provide tools and methodologies to support development of highly interactive graphics programs by and for SERC-supported research workers. Current work includes development and evaluation of object oriented programming systems, user interface prototyping and development tools, and related window manager research and development. Programmers with a range of experience are required, to continue and extend these developments. Candidates with originality and enthusiasm are especially sought. Knowledge of UNIX is not essential, but would be an asset. Applicants must be able to demonstrate sound programming practice and have interest (and preferably experience) in development of devices such as PERQ, with their high potential for good quality graphics and interaction, and hence vastly improved user interface.

OTHER VACANCIES INCLUDE:

- Networking Support
- Hardware/Software Interface Designers
- Intelligent Knowledge Based Systems Programmer
- C Programmers for UNIX
- UNIX Communications/Systems Programmers
- Graphics Programmers
- GEC User Support Programmers
- Decision Support Database Analyst/Programmer

- Transaction Processing Database Systems Programmer
- Scientific Database Programmer Analyst
- Single User Systems Support Programmers
- Cobol Applications Programmer
- Image Processing
- Electronics CAD
- Computational Modelling

Appointments will be made in one of the following grades depending on qualifications and experience.

Scientific Officer £5000 - £8183

Higher Scientific Officer £7438 - £10038

Applicants should have a degree, HONORND or equivalent in a scientific, mathematical or engineering subject.

Appointment to the grade of HSO requires a 1st or 2nd Class Honours degree with 2 years post graduate research or development experience or a minimum of 5 years relevant experience after qualifying for other applicants.

Rented housing for married couples and some assistance with expenses incurred in house sale/purchase will be available in appropriate cases. Good recreational facilities.

For full details and an application form please write quoting VNS14 and TITLES of the posts you are interested in, to Recruitment Office, Personnel Group, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Science and Engineering Research Council, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon OX11 0QX, or telephone Abingdon (0235) 448436.

Closing date for applications: 28 February 1985

serc Rutherford Appleton Laboratory

Scottish Office Research and Senior Research Officers

...to join one of the nine branches of the Central Research Unit which provides a social research service to all the Scottish departments. The main function of the Unit is to carry out original and sharply focused policy research. The current vacancies are in teams working in Housing, Social Work, Transport and Criminal Justice.

Housing Branch - Research Officer ...to help with studies on the effectiveness of initiatives in the management of public sector housing and on the impact of public-private joint venture housing schemes.

Housing Branch - Research Officer/Senior Research Officer ...to study the department's continuing research on the effectiveness of the improvement grant system. Also work on forecasting housing expenditure and managing the research review machinery.

Transport Branch - Research Officer ...to study the efficiency and effectiveness of capital investment in various parts of transport infrastructure and services and to help evaluate developments in local transport provision.

Social Work Branch - Research Officer ...for research assistance to the SRO

carrying out a study of the nature, scale and organisation of use of social workers in hospital. Also help to evaluate alternative means of meeting social work's clients needs.

Candidates for all RO posts should normally have a degree with 1st or upper 2nd class honours (where divided), or a post-graduate degree, in a relevant subject. Exceptionally others with experience of special value also considered.

For the SRO post, a degree with 1st or 2nd class honours, or a post-graduate degree in a relevant subject is essential together with significant post-graduate research experience (normally at least 3 years).

Further details on application.

SALARY: SRO £7500 - £11920; RO £6015 - £8735. Starting salary may be above the minimum. Promotion prospects.

For full details and an application form (to be returned by 12 February 1985) write to Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 1JB, or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 468591 (answering service operates outside office hours). Please quote ref: G/6439.

The Civil Service is an equal opportunity employer

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY COMPUTER PROGRAMMER

A programmer/analyst is required to join a small research team, consisting of psychiatrists, statisticians and a psychologist, based at the General Practice Research Unit at the Institute of Psychiatry in London. The team's objective is to design, implement and evaluate a system for the assessment, by computer, of psychological problems in general practice. The programme will be written, initially, in BASIC, but will be structured to allow for future development using expert systems methodology. The successful applicant will already have some experience with BASIC on microcomputers, but will be expected to acquire new skills as the project evolves. The period of employment is 1 year, starting as soon as possible. Salary will be on Research Worker Grade 1B in the range £5,800 - £6,400 plus £1,200 per London Allowance. For application form and job description, please send stamped addressed envelope to the Assistant Secretary, Institute of Psychiatry, De Crespigny Park, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AF quoting Ref PWC. Closing date for applications: 28 February 1985.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING Telephone: LONDON 01-278 2332 MANCHESTER 061-832 7200

European Media Sales

A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO COMBINE EUROPEAN TRAVEL AND A CAREER WITH THE UK'S FOREMOST BUSINESS PUBLISHERS. We are looking for a European Advertisement Representative. Created by expansion, this exciting new position will require you to service and expand existing accounts whilst researching and developing new ones.

Anything underground from cable TV to the Channel Tunnel falls within the scope of TUNNELS AND TUNNELLING, an international monthly combining high level finance and high technology. Sales experience, preferably in media, coupled with a good knowledge of German are desirable and excellent communication skills, resourcefulness and good organisational ability are essential. It will be necessary to spend up to two weeks at a time in mainland Europe travelling mainly by car, so additional languages would be an advantage.

If you meet these requirements and would like to be a key member of a small and highly successful team we want to hear from you. Based in London, the position commands a highly attractive package comprising salary, commission, a wide choice of company car, five weeks holiday and all the benefits associated with a company of Morgan-Grampian's standing. Write in the first instance with a c.v. and a phone number where you may be contacted to: Roger Adashead, Advertisement Manager, Tunnels and Tunnelling, MORGAN-GRAMPIAN PLC, 30 Calderwood Street, London SE18 6QH.

2. SENIOR TRANSLATOR/REVISER & JUNIOR TRANSLATOR/REVISER (from Dutch & German into English)

Leading Dutch translation company seeks British-born and educated staff employees. Requirements: broad knowledge of technical, economic and legal subjects; clarity of style; experience with dictation; for post 2: several years' experience; knowledge other languages advantage. Applicants may be requested to do trial translations. Salary in accordance with quality of work and output (£8,800 - c. £14,000 p.a.). Good working conditions in small international team. Send application (stating willingness to move) to: Mr. G. J. Bothof, Vertaalsbureau Bothof, 61 Amstelveenseweg 174, 6524 GT Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR at The Royal Horticultural Society's Garden, Wisley, Surrey

Applications are invited for the post of Director for the RHS Garden, Wisley, Surrey, following the appointment of Mr C. D. Brickett, the present Director, to the position of Director General of The Royal Horticultural Society.

The successful applicant is likely to be between 30-45 years of age, possess a degree in Horticulture/Botany, an ND4 or a relevant equivalent qualification and must have proven administrative and managerial ability and experience. Further details of the post may be obtained by applying, in writing, to: The Director General, The Royal Horticultural Society, PO Box 313, Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE. Completed applications must be received not later than 1st March, 1985.

ADVERTISEMENTS CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

It is a condition of acceptance of advertisements that the proprietors of The Guardian do not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement on a specified date or at all, although every effort will be made to meet the wishes of advertisers, further that they do not accept liability for any loss or damage caused by an error in accuracy in the printing or non-appearance of any advertisement. They also reserve the right to classify correctly any advertisement, edit or delete any objectionable wording or reject any advertisement. Although every advertisement is carefully checked occasionally mistakes do occur. We therefore ask advertisers to assist us by checking our advertisements carefully and advise us immediately should an error occur. We regret that we cannot accept responsibility for more than ONE INCORRECT insertion and that no reimbursement will be granted in the case of typographical or other changes which do not affect the value of the advertisement.

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A FIRST MANAGEMENT ROLE CIRCA £13,000

In the highly competitive cigarette market, Philip Morris has an enviable position: our Marlboro product is an international brand leader and, following the success of its launch in the south east of England in January last year, Refill is now available nationally. Our success has been due largely to a combination of skilful forward planning, an innovative marketing approach and effective market research.

The restructuring of our Marketing Services Department has resulted in a need for a talented and ambitious Market Research Manager to head a team of two involved in the collection, evaluation and interpretation of market data.

This is an ideal opportunity for a young man or woman who has two or three years' market research experience, perhaps gained within a Research House, and who is now ready to move into a management position.

This is a broad-based research role, reporting to the Marketing Services Manager, but your prime area of involvement will be to develop and validate the qualitative research requirements for the U.K., liaising closely with the European headquarters in Lausanne. You will also have budget responsibility and will work closely with U.K. Research Houses.

It's a demanding appointment, calling for good communications skills and the ability to influence others, but it carries an attractive salary and benefits package and offers excellent promotion prospects.

If you would like to join this thriving company please contact George Vale, Personnel Manager at Philip Morris Limited, Philip Morris House, 21 High Street, Feltham, Middlesex TW13 4AD. Tel: 01-751 6368.



Softly, softly from Programming into Analysis (on £11,000 a year)

Like a lot of programmers, you probably want to move into systems analysis.

But you want the move to be a smooth transition, not a leap in the dark.

In which case, we think you'll be interested in a job for an analyst/programmer which one of our clients has asked us to help them fill.

The company is a large, very successful advertising agency that's in the middle of migrating from an ICL System 10 to a System 25, supported by Ericsson micros.

They're already running some pretty sophisticated bespoke and standard applications; the intention is to develop many more, and eventually to introduce a company-wide database.

So while your immediate involvement would be in writing new programs, you'd soon find yourself increasingly involved in analysing new systems requirements.

To handle the immediate tasks, you'll need at least two years commercial programming experience in a System 10 or 25 environment, working in COBOL, and/or Assembler. To grow into the analysis role, you'll need the intellectual equipment that got you through some A levels, and a personality that means you don't have to be asked to get things moving.

The location is central London; the benefits really are good; the job really does give you the entry into the world of analysis that you're probably looking for.

If you're seriously interested, send a copy of your c.v. in confidence to T. G. Scott & Son Ltd, Reference 827, 30-32 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HR or write for a Personal History Form.

TECHNICAL EDITOR - LOCATION BIRMINGHAM SALARY NEGOTIABLE A.A.E.

Our clients are an International Computer Training organisation who with Government support are developing open learning packages for training in Computer Technology.

They are seeking a Technical Editor who will work for the project leader and within a project team responsible for editing and coordinating Technical scripts and artwork and to prepare all material for printing.

Candidates should have a sound knowledge of computers and data processing and should preferably also have previous experience in the Technical Publication field.

A very realistic remuneration package will be offered to those who can meet the above Job Specification. Send a comprehensive C.V. or telephone for an application form quoting reference OT3. (All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence).

COMPUTER CONSULTANTS INTERNATIONAL 24-36 STEPHENSON WAY, LONDON NW1 2HD Telephone 01-387 3550/358 2312 Licensed by the Department of Employment, London SE8555. Birmingham M1863. Bristol SW963

EURO ACTION-ACORD

An International Development Agency working with Rural Communities in Africa seeks the following personnel:

SUDAN Representative/Agricultural Programme Co-ordinator/Programme Development and Design Officer/Community Development Specialist

REQUIREMENTS: — Extensive Third World experience in responsible positions. — Familiarity with NGO activities. — Sound judgement and strong analytical ability. — Strong administrative skills. — Proven experience in management personnel. — Planning and evaluation. — Linguistic ability.

OTHERS: We are also recruiting for short and long-term personnel with at least 3 years' Third World experience in the fields of Agriculture, Primary Health Care, Appropriate Technology and Water Engineering.

Remuneration: Most posts, professional salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. **Duration:** Short-term: 1-3 months consultancy Long-term: Initially 2 years', with possibility for extension.

For further details, please write with full c.v. plus names of 3 professional referees to: Personnel Dept., Euro Action-ACORD, Francis House, (3rd Floor), Francis Street, London, SW1P 1DQ.

WHO DARES WINS

Investment trading isn't easy and we sincerely doubt you'll become a millionaire overnight. However, as a professional and established company we will comprehensively train you to earn in excess of £12,000 in your first year. If you are presentable, ambitious and prepared to work extremely hard for the rewards you desire, we offer an unparalleled career and commission structure and consider enthusiasm to be the best form of experience. Age 21-35.

Telephone Mark James on 01-831 98447, 4 lines.

Two Senior Sales and Marketing appointments in the Semiconductor Industry

E. T. Electrotech is an expanding UK based international company successfully designing, manufacturing, and selling semiconductor production equipment to a world market.

Our continued growth has created two challenging positions for young professionals within our sales and marketing functions.

SENIOR MARKETING EXECUTIVE

at least £12,000 p.a.

Based at group headquarters we require a person with a thorough knowledge of all aspects of marketing in a high-tech environment. Qualifications to degree level, ideally in a technical discipline, should be supplemented by several years experience in sales and/or marketing. We expect the successful applicant to display the potential to assume the role of marketing manager within two years.

COMMERCIAL MANAGER

at least £12,000 p.a.

Based at our sales division headquarters we seek a seasoned professional to take responsibility for a full range of commercial activities including documentation, contracts, insurances, and internal staff supervision. Candidates should preferably have formal qualifications in accountancy or law, or hold an M.B.A.

Both positions will command highly competitive salaries and the benefits associated with a progressive growing company. Relocation expenses will be paid where appropriate. If you think you can meet our high standards, please phone or write for an application or send full career details to:

Chris Matthews, E.T. Electrotech, Whale Wharf, Littleton upon Seven, Thornbury, Bristol BS32 1NP. Tel: 0454-419008.



Showroom Development Officer

ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE up to £11,645

North West Gas, the largest Region within British Gas, serves over 2 million customers in Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cheshire, and operates over 100 showrooms throughout these areas.

We are now looking for a Showroom Development Officer to be based in this Marketing Services Department of Altrincham. The successful applicant will be responsible for the Marketing Services Manager for the design of all showrooms and must have first hand knowledge of interior design, building techniques and legislation affecting building projects. Candidates should have interior design or architectural qualifications and at least four years practical experience. A clean driving licence is essential.

Starting salary will be in the range £10,119 to £11,645.

In addition we offer a range of benefits including excellent pension scheme, over 5 weeks' annual holiday and assistance with relocation expenses where appropriate.

Please telephone for an application form between 9 am - 4.30 pm Monday to Friday and return it quoting ref: HQ28/R/G to Personnel Office [HQ], North West Gas, Welman House, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 8AE. Telephone 061-941 3964.

Closing date for applications: 31st January 1985.

NORTH WEST GAS

TRAINERS WANTED ICOM LARGE CO-OPS PILOT TRAINING PROGRAMME

We are looking for a number of TRAINERS to work with one or more large London Co-operatives. They will need skills in some of the following areas:

- Democratic and Collective working
- Management
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For further information and an application form (to be returned by 19 February 1985) write to Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 1JB or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 468551 (answering service operates outside office hours). Please quote ref: T/34673.

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Further information is obtainable from the Microelectronics Research Laboratory, Cambridge. Tel: 0223 333000. Fax: 0223 333001. Applications should be sent to: Dr A. J. McKenna, Department of Theoretical Physics, The Schuster Laboratory, The University, Manchester, M13 9PL, as soon as possible.

The University of Manchester

Department of Theoretical Physics

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Applications are invited for a Research Assistant position for one year to carry out day to day laboratory work in the Forensic Science Unit. Applicants should have a degree in forensic science or a related discipline and a knowledge of the forensic science laboratory environment. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day to day running of the unit and for the preparation of reports.

Salary will be on Scale 1B (£6,600 - £2,900 per annum). Job benefit.

Applications (with cv and references) should be sent to: Dr R. J. McKenna, Forensic Science Unit, Department of Chemistry, Strathclyde University, Livingstone Building, George Street, Glasgow G1 1RX.

Closing date for applications: February 5, 1985.

There is cautious optimism about job prospects for this year's graduates. And the outlook for 1986 should be even better. Jack Cross reports.

More cream on the milk round

THE SIGNS are that this year's graduates will have a better chance of finding employment than at any time since 1981. This is the message contained in the annual report just released by the organisations whose job it is to know. It is jointly produced by AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services), CSU (the Central Services Unit for Careers and Appointments Services) and SCOE (the Standing Conference of Employers of Graduates).

All round the country, careers advisers in higher education establishments are examining the auguries in the form of applications by firms to send representatives to take part in the milk round, the recruiting drive which always takes place at this time of the year.

They are a cautious breed. Manchester University estimates requests are "up about 4 per cent this year." Bristol expects its 200 or so regular attendees but, as for others, they envisage "a small improvement in prospects all round."

At Loughborough they don't expect to receive many more firms, though the recruiters have asked to see more applicants. Colin Slipp, of Newcastle University, observes "a gentle turn-up in the market, with more milk round bookings; some large companies have reappeared after an absence, in some cases, of a decade. He is one of several who have a gut feeling that there are going to be more vacancies this year."

Nor are the polytechnics left out. Employers seem to be beginning to see what they have to offer and to treat them on equal terms with the universities. Bob Porter, of Leicester Poly, gives a lot of credit to AGCAS for helping to make the selection process more rational. His institution is receiving approaches not only from new companies, especially those involved in the new technologies, but from the bigger, more traditional, firms. Students on sandwich courses have done particularly well: a quarter have received offers from their parent companies but, worldwide-wise, a lot of them are looking around first.

Several factors have combined to create more opportunities for graduates and to intensify the pressure on employers to compete for the most able ones. An increase in jobs has occurred at a time when graduate output is static; like last year, about 66,000 are available for the home market. A drop in the number produced by the universities is more or less counterbalanced by an increase in those from the polytechnics.

The demand for immediately-available recruits (normally competition carried over from the previous year) is about 70 per cent up. In some sectors, says the report, the demand for 1985 graduates is up as much as 50 per cent. "This will apply particularly in the case of graduates in 'shortage' subjects such as electronics, but also in the management, training, in industry and commerce."

'We'd rather have good generalists'

According to the Labour Market Quarterly Report (November 1984), a consistently stable number of graduates will be required by industries engaged in the production of capital consumer goods, the Civil Service, and in spite of cuts and rate-capping the public services. It records a long-term trend towards a demand for more skilled entrants into non-manual trades. Or, as the government publication, *Graduates and Jobs*, puts it, "more graduates are taking jobs that formerly would have been filled by less qualified people such as O level and A level school leavers. And in some jobs, although graduates are preferred as recruits (and a degree is still an advantage) the level of work required is not much the same as for people with lower qualifications." Maybe we are approaching, Japan-style, the age of the graduate.

This is not the only publication to stress the value to the job-seeker of being able to demonstrate confidence and competence in handling figures, not necessarily at degree level. At Loughborough they find that there are increasing opportunities to go into firms offering financial services, like banks, insurance companies (actuarial work in particular) and accountancy. Nationally, of all the graduates who walk straight into jobs, 10 per cent are on route to becoming chartered accountants.

But the really heavy demand in 1985 (and for the foreseeable future) is likely to remain unsatisfied. It is for people who have graduated in electronics and almost anything to do with computers and information technology. The shortage should have been predicted and countered by correct decisions back in 1978, says a recent CSU report. As it is, after you have taken into account all the other options open to students with mathematical and science-based qualifications, there simply won't be enough, high-tech graduates to go round.

Even in these fields, though, the recruiters are selective, says Colin Slipp. If they don't find the quality of person they want, they take nobody and look elsewhere. There is no guarantee of a job to weaker candidates.

Everyone agrees that women are missing out because they haven't prepared themselves to take the opportunities opening up in these fields. The 1983 figures for Electrical Engineering (which includes electronics) shows that 2,506 men (5.7 per cent) of the graduating numbers last year had degrees, but only 184 women (5 per cent). It all goes back to the well-documented tendency for girls to turn away from maths-based options in secondary school.

A Bristol University adviser comments on another feature of this year's job market. This is an "indecent competition" for the very best graduates, judged against academic criteria but including personal attributes. "They say, 'We'd rather have good generalists (if they're very good) than average quality posers of special skills'."

Perhaps this is a commercial judgment which Sir Keith Joseph and Lord Young might like to note. It has always been true that a fair proportion of jobs (one-third, perhaps) don't call for specific degree subjects. All advisers agree that this proportion is at the end of the graduating year — after six months. Colin Slipp denies that this is valid for some occupations. Intending artists, designers, theatre workers, archaeologists, museum workers, journalists and media people often need a familiarisation period to get to know people and be themselves known. That six months can be a kind of apprenticeship.

It is also, coincidentally, the length of unemployment needed to qualify for MSC schemes like the Community Programme, in which they may get the chance to practice their skills and join the variety of informal networks which help to provide an entry into their chosen career.

1985 is going to be a good year for graduates and, the optimists say, 1986 ought to be better. One of the reasons is that while the technological revolution destroyed blue-collar jobs it has also increased the demand for intelligent and able people to run the more sophisticated systems which are now so prevalent. It's not an inevitable progression, though. One university adviser hints darkly, "It will hit the professions next."

So the first chapter of Edinburgh University's Student Guide to Job Hunting is about self-assessment. AGCAS uses Gradscope, a computer-aided

paper and pencil exercise, to help people produce their own personal profiles. On the advice of AGCAS the DES has invited organisations to submit proposals for the design, development and testing of a computer-aided guidance system to help graduates match their analysed aptitudes with changing career opportunities.

"It's hardly surprising," says Peter Rivin, of Essex University, "when they've spent a young lifetime in an uncompetitive atmosphere." He advises students to pursue a sensible strategy on job applications so that form-filling and interviews don't get mixed up with the all-important preparation for Finals. "Get stuck in in autumn and then drive again when your exams are over."

Statistics on graduate employment can be deceptive. Graduates and jobs, for example, can encourage students of the arts, humanities and social sciences because medicine, pharmacy, accounting and engineering always come top of their success lists. Critics say they are including in their figures people who are not taking up real jobs but simply entering into long-term pre-registration training, which may not be successfully completed.

'It will hit the professions next'

The bench-mark between unemployment and employment is placed at the end of the graduating year — after six months. Colin Slipp denies that this is valid for some occupations. Intending artists, designers, theatre workers, archaeologists, museum workers, journalists and media people often need a familiarisation period to get to know people and be themselves known. That six months can be a kind of apprenticeship.

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Completed applications submitted by February 7, 1985

DURHAM UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Applications are invited from graduates or those producing in 1985 for the post

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

to work on the influence of age on breeding behaviour of the Antarctic Shag *Phalacrocorax atriceps* in the Antarctic. The successful applicant will be responsible for the design and execution of the field work, and will be expected to publish the results of the work.

The appointment will be for 14 weeks and will involve two trips to the Antarctic. Applicants should have a degree in Biology or Zoology or a related subject, and should be able to register as a Ph.D. candidate, failing in 1985.

Applications (2 copies) naming three referees should be sent by February 15, 1985 to the Selection Committee, Department of Biology, Durham University, Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA. The successful applicant will be notified by post.

APPOINTMENTS General

COMPUTER STAFF

Brighton Polytechnic

COMPUTER CENTRE User Services Section

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Wolverhampton Borough Council EDUCATION COMMITTEE AN AREA ORGANISER

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UNIVERSITY OF BATH

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Applications are invited for the posts of Team Leader and Systems Programmer in the Systems Development Department at SWURCC.

SWURCC provides a regional computing service across an extensive area system communications network to university institutions in the South West. The centre is equipped with a large data processing system, a VME, an ICL Esprit will be installed in 1985 and a further upgrade is expected in 1986.

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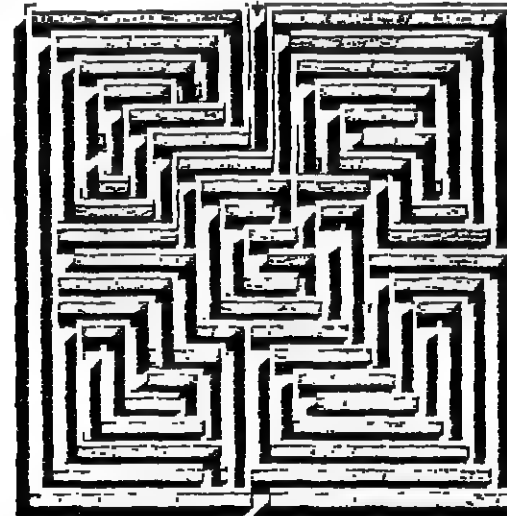
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MICHAEL SMITH
on opening a floodgate

Hands to the water rate pump

THE ROW over the cost of water, which has been simmering gently on the political backburner since November, is now fast approaching boiling point.

Thames, the biggest regional water authority, is openly challenging strict new Government financial targets, which mean that for the next three years domestic and industrial water bills will rise at more than double the projected rate of inflation and well above what the industry wanted.

The Government proposals are being roundly assailed as a means of "backdoor" taxation of water and are proving yet another embarrassment for the ministerial duo at the Department of Environment, Patrick Jenkin and Ian Gow.

The row first surfaced in November during the inter-departmental talks about public spending cuts for the 1985-86 financial year which begins in April. The ten regional water authorities in England and Wales emerged from the spending talks with a conflicting message.

On the one hand, the DoE was pressing the authorities to increase their capital expenditure on water and sewerage facilities. On the other, the DoE shared the industry's plea for a 3 per cent to £208 million and told the authorities to repay their hundreds of millions of pounds in Government loans within the next three years.

Water chiefs quickly worked out that to meet the new targets, rates would have to rise by an average of 12 per cent in April and by around 9 per cent in each of the two following years. The projected 12 per cent rise in prices for domestic water and sewerage is about double the Government forecast of inflation over the same period. The rises are also well above what the industry wanted to see.

But the industry has also complained that householders and industry have had water too cheaply for too long.

Mr Len Hill, chairman of the Water Authorities Association, told a meeting with Mr Gow and summed up the position neatly: "The industry is being asked to make more money than is necessary to run the industry."

But Roy Watts, recently installed as head of Thames, took a harder line. He said the proposals were an abuse of monopoly power and has now challenged Mr Jenkin's right to be making the industry's case to Parliament for the new financial regime. Mr Jenkin has not responded.

Thames, with 11 million households and 25 per cent of the population in its constituency, is rapidly becoming an important test case for both the water industry itself and other public sector bodies unhappy at being used as tax-raising vehicles.

Mr Watts has drawn on his Mr Government from British Association, that the industry's case to Parliament for the new financial regime. Mr Jenkin has not responded.

Thames Water's activities, wants to put up domestic water charges by three per cent in April. But the Government's structures mean that, short of an unexpected and humiliating defeat for Jenkin and Gow, tariffs will soar by 10 per cent.

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The effect of the new Government stance is that prices will have to rise by 10 per cent, debt repayment will climb to as much as £45 million, and capital spending will fall in real terms, after adjustment for inflation, by £25 million.

The consequences for Thames Water and its customers offer a stark contrast to the Government's plea for lower inflation, increased capital spending and more commercial freedom in the public sector. Further, there is every indication that the experience of Thames will be repeated elsewhere in the country during the coming years as other authorities are forced to repay old debts.

The Thames region is overwhelmingly Tory and while it is difficult to envisage a mass revolt against the Government on water, there is considerable concern among MPs.

However, time is running out. Mr Watts says that Thames must notify customers of the charges it plans for 1985-86 by February 20. If there is no shift in the Government's ground, it is probable that Thames will send out bills with a demand for a three per cent increase — in line with its original proposals. If the Government wins, Thames would be forced to issue supplementary bills demanding the additional seven per cent — a highly unpopular move that would likely rebound on the Government than it does on its servant. But the Government can hardly have expected an easy ride by imposing a tax on water.



Britain's first atomic weapon was detonated in the Montebello Islands in the Pacific in 1952 (right). In a new weapons programme now needed at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston (above)?

DAVID FAIRHALL outlines the problems facing Britain's tactical weapons policy makers

Taking stock of the ageing nuclear stockpile

THE LAST thing Mrs Thatcher and her Defence Secretary, Michael Heseltine, want right now is another contentious nuclear issue to fuel public debate and provide fresh ammunition for the anti-nuclear movement.

But sooner or later the military planners had to face the problem of replacing Britain's stockpile of so-called tactical nuclear weapons — that is the bombs and depth-charges rather than the long-range missiles like Polaris or Trident — and the signs are it can no longer be avoided.

Preliminary staff work is already quietly under way and there are several external pressures which seem likely to force a political decision before the end of the year. In the words of one senior military source, "we should have replaced these things years ago."

The first factor is that like Polaris, our bombs and depth-charges are simply getting old. Nuclear weapons are carefully-engineered structures assembled from brittle materials like plutonium, conventional high explosives and various electrical components. At a price, they can be almost indefinitely refurbished. But extending their "shelf-life" in this way takes no account of the safety risks involved. The military would like to see whether they are additional safety locks, easier storage, a wider range of explosive yields, or just external changes to adapt the weapons to a new shape of bomb for a new type of aircraft, for example.

Some of these potential improvements should concern all of us, military or civilian, even if there is no immediate prospect of the weapons being used. Others would be of considerable relevance if they were used.

So when NATO's commanders began recently to rethink nuclear planning group meets in March, he will present his own realistic lines — produced by an increasingly anxious public opinion — there was a parallel move to modernise the weaponry as well. The "neutron bomb," designed to kill tank crews by prompt radiation without destroying so many nearby buildings by heat and blast, was a product of this process. And although in this country we try not to talk about such nasty things, even behind closed doors in the House of Commons Defence Committee, the principle applies to Britain's modest inventory of tactical nuclear weapons as it does to the much larger American one.

NATO realised years ago that something would have to be done about the vast stockpile of 7,000 tactical or battlefield nuclear weapons that had accumulated in Europe. Much of it was virtually unusable — either physically obsolete, politically unacceptable, or lacking any modern military rationale.

A thousand of the oldest warheads and weapons were simply taken back to the United States and dismantled to recover the valuable fissile material. Then a mainly civilian body called the High Level Group, chaired by Richard Perle, was given the job of rationalising the remainder. This led to the Montebello decision of 1983 — to reduce the remaining 8,000 to 4,600 by removing 2,000 ageing bombs and newly-deployed cruise and Pershing missiles like those at Greenham Common.

NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe (Saceur), the forthright US general, Bernard Rogers, had meanwhile been asking the High Level Group to look at the problem in the context of his Belgian headquarters' annual nuclear weapons requirements study. Gen. Rogers disapproved of the High Level Group's decision to keep the old weapons, and he was given the job of rationalising the remainder. This led to the Montebello decision of 1983 — to reduce the remaining 8,000 to 4,600 by removing 2,000 ageing bombs and newly-deployed cruise and Pershing missiles like those at Greenham Common.

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ment the Montebello decision over the next three years and what kind of nuclear arsenal he would like to see as Saceur — not necessarily the same.

The Montebello stockpile includes all land-based weapons in Europe — nuclear artillery and aircraft bombs — but not naval weapons. So the RAF's British-made bombs and American depth-charges are included in General Rogers's requirements study. So are Rhine Army's American battlefield missiles and shells, or artillery-fired atomic projectiles as the US Army calls them. But the Royal Navy's depth-charges are excluded, even though they apparently use the same basic nuclear device as one of the two types of bomb the RAF is believed to have available.

An accurate breakdown of the 6,000 warheads has never been published. The broad numbers are probably something like this: Tomahawk cruise missiles and Pershing II ballistic missiles 250, Nike-Hercules anti-aircraft missiles 650, Lance battlefield missiles 700, Honest John battlefield missiles 200, atomic demolition munitions (nuclear land mines) 400, depth-charges (for land-based aircraft) 200, bombs 1,500, artillery shells (for 155mm and 8in howitzers) 2,000. Total 6,000.

The Nike-Hercules are scheduled to be phased out by 1992 and replaced by the non-nuclear Patriot. General Rogers will surely recommend reducing the number of land mines (I have yet to meet anyone in NATO who believes the West Germans would give permission for their use, since they would have to be dug in before the battle started and would contaminate the ground afterwards).

No doubt he would also like to get rid of the remaining obsolescent Honest John missiles in Greece and Turkey, but may be reluctant to do so unless they are replaced by the more modern

United Kingdom in itself is neither a target, nor a factor of any real consequence in the calculations of the greatest powers," he writes. Britain's contribution to the defence of Western Europe is at the expense of her own security, since NATO is basically an alliance between the United States and West Germany.

The chances of a neutral Britain being attacked in a super-power war are low, and if it were attacked, the objective would be the use of its facilities. The level of destruction would probably be lower than that expected in an alliance, when Britain would enter war as an active combatant.

Group Captain Johnson does not suggest that defence costs under neutrality would be much lower than they are today. He describes his idea as sensible, and says that it has been so little canvassed because politicians, military chiefs and the media find it distasteful to accept a relatively minor role for Britain.

He developed his neutralist views because it seemed odd that with the changed relationship between states in Europe and the change in attitudes between the United States and the Soviet Union, the same defence grouping should continue today. It was right to form NATO in 1949, but not right for Britain to continue its membership now.

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longer range version of the Lance missile with a choice of warheads, nuclear or conventional, to replace its somewhat vulnerable Sin bowitzers.

If the RAF is to have a new nuclear weapon, should it opt for a free-fall bomb or some sort of cruise missile — which might then best be bought off the American shelf? A long-range standard missile is in fact under development as a joint NATO programme, but according to the Ministry of Defence, this would not be suitable for a nuclear warhead.

The Royal Navy could once again use the same basic warhead as the RAF to equip its anti-submarine helicopters. But first it must consider whether the development of the intelligent homing torpedoes makes the cumbersome nuclear depth-charge redundant.

The whole trend of NATO's evolving tactics, vigorously endorsed by Gen. Rogers, has been to place less reliance on nuclear weapons as advanced technology makes it possible to strike deeply, accurately and powerfully with non-nuclear weapons, exchanging the blunderbuss for the sniper.

The British forces could encourage this trend by abandoning the nuclear battlefield as the weapons wear out, thereby making a unilateral gesture towards, among other things, the central European nuclear-weapons-free zone the SDP leader Dr David Owen sought to promote.

They will be held back by the argument that even where there is no longer any direct military case for a nuclear weapon — because a conventional one can now do the job — it is required by what NATO officials like to call the seamless web of nuclear deterrence. In other words, we, NATO — though not necessarily Britain — must retain a few of everything so the other side knows we have them.

Finally, there is what one might call the Aldermaston

factor — the activity of that powerful, secretive nuclear establishment which gave us the £1,100 million Chevaline warhead for Polaris without even informing the full Cabinet, let alone the House of Commons. And this will probably set the timing of any tactical nuclear replacement programme, because the new plutonium fabrication facility being built at Aldermaston at a cost of several hundred million pounds apparently does not have the capacity to make Trident missile warheads and bombs simultaneously. Either that, or some other bottleneck in the production line, means that the tactical warheads would have to be programmed in when the Trident job was finished.

The essence of the Aldermaston case will be that Britain needs a continuing nuclear design and development capability to keep our end up with the Americans and monitor activity in the Soviet Union or elsewhere. Besides which there are lots of top-grade scientists down in Berkshire who will need another exciting challenge — not to mention a job — when their Trident work is finished, or perhaps even cancelled. Without Trident, Britain would rely on a cruise missile or perhaps just a bomb as its primary "deterrent." And if we do not get on with the job of testing a small modern device, perhaps the Americans and the Russians will do a deal over our heads to ban testing altogether.

For the moment, all that matters is that this vital and complex issue should be dragged out into the open for wider discussion and scrutiny to establish whether the speculative assumptions written here are well founded. It must not be left, as policy decisions on nuclear weapons always have been in this country, for cosmetic parliamentary debate when the Whitehall papers have been written and the ministerial decisions taken.

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How to be secure in the knowledge of neutrality



Group Captain Johnson

BRITAIN should disengage from NATO, recognises that its international role has diminished, and defend itself under a policy of military non-alignment. This is the view of Peter Johnson, a former group-captain in the RAF and past president of his local Conservative Association in Darford, Kent.

Outlining his argument in a book published today, *Neutrality: A Policy for Britain*, he joins the small but apparently growing group of British right-wingers who have come to share considerable common ground with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. They believe that the world has changed considerably since 1945, and that the Soviet Union has no quarrel with Britain sufficient to lead to war, and that the defence consensus of the past 40 years which underlies NATO needs urgent re-examination.

They also share the view, as Mr Richard Body MP put it at a press conference for the book yesterday, that the media does not give a fair or adequate hearing to alternative views on defence. He is sure, he said, that efforts would be made to smear Group Captain Johnson as a pacifist or Communist, when, as holder of the DSO and DFC, and a Conservative, he was clearly neither.

Nor does Group Captain Johnson emerge from his book as either anti-American, or moralist, or even anti-nuclear. He is a realist, and in his own defence, Britain might decide to keep tactical nuclear weapons. Strategic weapons such as Polaris and Trident would have to go from the arsenal since Britain cannot afford to make them, and the United States would not provide them for a neutral nation.

His argument is down to earth and practical. "Whether we like it or not, the United Kingdom in itself is neither a target, nor a factor of any real consequence in the calculations of the greatest powers," he writes. Britain's contribution to the defence of Western Europe is at the expense of her own security, since NATO is basically an alliance between the United States and West Germany.

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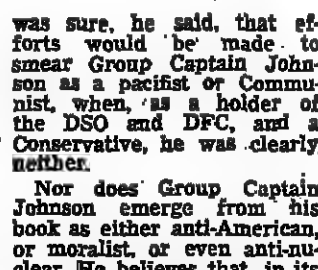
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Neutrality: A Policy for Britain by Peter Johnson, is published by Maurice Temple Smith at £9.50 hardback, £3.95 paperback.

JONATHAN STEELE on the group captain flying a policy of military non-alignment

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Group Captain Johnson does not suggest that defence costs under neutrality would be much lower than they are today. He describes his idea as sensible, and says that it has been so little canvassed because politicians, military chiefs and the media find it distasteful to accept a relatively minor role for Britain.

He developed his neutralist views because it seemed odd that with the changed relationship between states in Europe and the change in attitudes between the United States and the Soviet Union, the same defence grouping should continue today. It was right to form NATO in 1949, but not right for Britain to continue its membership now.

He concedes that there is an isolationist feel to his ideas, but adds that Britain cannot address itself to the

question whether other NATO members should withdraw one by one. That is for their people to decide. He hopes only that the idea will be thought-provoking and "spread across the political spectrum."

He challenges the notion that Britain has a moral obligation to join the US, even though Britain may accept much that the US aspires to in the world. "Practical considerations have always governed American policy, and it is right that it should be so. Practical considerations as seen from London must govern British policy," he writes.

Neutrality: A Policy for Britain by Peter Johnson, is published by Maurice Temple Smith at £9.50 hardback, £3.95 paperback.

Outlining his argument in a book published today, *Neutrality: A Policy for Britain*, he joins the small but apparently growing group of British right-wingers who have come to share considerable common ground with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. They believe that the world has changed considerably since 1945, and that the Soviet Union has no quarrel with Britain sufficient to lead to war, and that the defence consensus of the past 40 years which underlies NATO needs urgent re-examination.

They also share the view, as Mr Richard Body MP put it at a press conference for the book yesterday, that the media does not give a fair or adequate hearing to alternative views on defence. He is sure, he said, that efforts would be made to smear Group Captain Johnson as a pacifist or Communist, when, as holder of the DSO and DFC, and a Conservative, he was clearly neither.

Nor does Group Captain Johnson emerge from his book as either anti-American, or moralist, or even anti-nuclear. He is a realist, and in his own defence, Britain might decide to keep tactical nuclear weapons. Strategic weapons such as Polaris and Trident would have to go from the arsenal since Britain cannot afford to make them, and the United States would not provide them for a neutral nation.

His argument is down to earth and practical. "Whether we like it or not, the United Kingdom in itself is neither a target, nor a factor of any real consequence in the calculations of the greatest powers," he writes. Britain's contribution to the defence of Western Europe is at the expense of her own security, since NATO is basically an alliance between the United States and West Germany.

DIARY

TONY BENN has developed a new and powerful technological weapon in his unswerving and mortal battle with the nation's media — a weapon much more sophisticated even than the pocket tape recorder which accompanies him wherever he goes.

He was visited at the weekend by BBC Radio reporter hoping to interview him for the World This Weekend. A little way into the interview a sharp disagreement occurred about the way the conversation was developing. Mr Benn was determined that no part of the interview should be transmitted. And so it was that, before the reporter's astonished eyes, he reached into a cupboard and produced a powerful electro-magnet which he duly plugged in and waved over the tape, thereby completely erasing all traces of the conversation that had just taken place.

THE membership boom in Mr Sid Biddell's constituency Labour Party is by no means limited to one man (this column yesterday). With reselection fever sweeping the CLP, the Southall party bigwigs have been keeping their eyes on matters and are expected to hold an inquiry into recent events.

BRENDA UTTING'S position as a prominent member of Nalco's NEC may be in some doubt as a result of her dismissal by Portsmouth City Council. Ms Utting, a right-winger, who has spoken on behalf of Lady Olga Mainland's bid for the council, was sacked after an internal audit by the council, where she works as a cashier in the leisure services department. Ms Utting, who was represented by Nalco at the dismissal hearing, is to appeal against the decision.

MILITANT'S decision once more to bring Mr Leonard Friends into play in their struggle against the Nalco Party's NEC demonstrates a slight lack of consistency. For it was in the December 3 meeting of the NEC that the (Militant) Young Socialist representative, Mr Francis Green, tabled a motion calling on the party to oppose with all its might "the interference of the courts in the running of democratic trade unions. One law for the Trols."

DOES Glenda Jackson have an eye on Westminster? Probably not, but she confesses that she was tempted by an approach from her local Blackheath ward Labour Party to stand during a coming by-election. A delegation from the party visited her at her Kidbrooke home at the weekend, but was told that she would be out of the country during the campaign. She said she was pleased to be asked and added: "I hope the party will be good enough to ask me for the next election. I would have stood for this election if I had not already been committed." Ms J., a member of Kidbrooke ward party, will make a donation to the Blackheath campaign instead.

PITY poor unlettered MPs in the dark watches of the night Mr Roland Boyes, to break the boredom, voted with a "Yes" instead of an "Abstain" vote. Mr Boyes, a Conservative, was the only MP to do so. Mr Boyes votes with a "Yes," and Mr Brian Sedgemoor with a "No." Mr Sedgemoor, a Labour MP, is the only MP to do so.

The shadow of the Dragon

Raymond Williams reviews two strong views of Welsh history and identity

BEFORE we can be sure that the dragon has two tongues, we have to be sure that it is the same dragon. We had better also, while we are about it, look into the natural history of dragons.

Something like this may be happening in the current television series on the history of the Welsh, with which these two books, by the joint presenters, are associated. Its Dragon has Two Tongues title is borrowed from a useful book by Glyn Jones, which explored the complexities of a national literature written in two languages.

Much more is at stake in any general history. What we have so far seen, in the early programmes and now in the books, is an adversarial kind of history, by two Welshmen as different from each other, in detail and in general, as could reasonably be hoped. This could be a useful Welsh repertoire to the smothering monotonies of more assured, more dominant and more complacent traditions.

Yet the dragon itself is still in question. There it is, with its forked or arrowed tongue, or the jacket of Vaughan-Thomas's book. The cover-note reassures us that "Wales is a Principality close to England geographically and politically, but it is also very diverse."

This is smoke, not flame. The use of "Principality" for the whole country begs the key question of the long division and contrast between Principality and Wales. Yet in its framework for a Prince, already provided from elsewhere, it interlocks neatly with the significant name-change to "United Kingdom" now being undertaken by officials and businessmen. Who knows what is Welsh or Wales when all is UK

When was Wales? by Gwyn A. Williams (Black Raven Press, £12.95).
Wales: a History, by Winford Vaughan-Thomas (Michael Joseph, £12.95).

of Yookay? Will there be Yookays yet?

One of the central advantages of being born and bred among the presumed Welsh is the profusion of official identities. Wales and Monmouthshire, as it was for me at school, with the force since we lived in the appendage. England-and-Wales: that administrative, legal and even weather-forecasting area. Wales for rugby but All-England for cricket. Welsh Wales and English Wales. Wales and Cymru. To anyone looking for an official status it was a nightmare. To anyone trying to think about communities and societies a blessing: a native gift.

These alternative responses inform these two books. For Vaughan-Thomas there is an assured Welsh identity and continuity, strong enough to include the pre-Celts and pre-Celts. For Gwyn Williams there is a long process of dislocation and remaking and dislocation again. The necessary distinction is between a story and a history.

Vaughan-Thomas is a skillful raconteur, with strong feelings for the physical land of Wales. The warm phrases and anecdotes, some of which have to say, denied me even in elementary school, come through with the geniality which most others have found persuasive. And then there is the balance of the book: fourteen concluding pages, from two hundred and sixtyone, on the extraordinary and shattering events

since the 1920s. No reader should be in any doubt about what kind of book, and what kind of historical preference, this is.

On the other hand a one-volume general history, by the leading historian of industrial Wales, bristles with problems and questions. Some of these are semantic: that is, central. Wales, in Gwyn Williams's argument, and its Old English name for the land of foreigners, suggests, came into existence in the ninth and tenth centuries "as a junior partner in a Britain run by England."

The British and other peoples — the others almost certainly a majority — who had previously lived in that land went through a long and still unfinished process of naming and being renamed; at times pulling back into an internally contested Cymric unity; at times, as around the Tudor Court, believing that they had recovered England for Britain and the British, and actually naming the British Empire.

Then, in the Industrial Revolution, an actual British nation, a working, unitary social order, emerged and for two centuries succeeded, leaving the Welsh — again redefining themselves — at worst a region, at best a cultural "nation." Even in this brief summary, the question "when was Wales?" is a question about definitions well before events and events before definitions.

I find this the best general history of the Welsh now available. It is especially strong from the medieval period onwards, and in the modern period with its possible reservation, remarkable. Where I wanted most to ask further questions was in the earlier periods, where a professional historian is most

limited by the extreme, scarcity of evidence.

There is a reasonable scepticism about the simplest versions of "the Celts," but there are important structural similarities between their kind of military invasion and domination and the three much better recorded later cases of what many Welshmen are reluctant to admit is the same kind of event: Roman, English and Norman. Within a perspective of "the Welsh" or indeed "Wales," this is obviously difficult to handle. Much of the surviving Welsh identity has been in a Celtic language. Yet there is apparent physical and material evidence that the real history of this people, so confused by shifting names, begins in that relatively early period, beyond all the current ideologies.

The bravest chapter of *When Was Wales?* is the exploration of the realities of the long Roman and post-Roman periods. Social and economic analysis, on admittedly scarce evidence, begins to undercut the simple tales of kings and saints. The opening to Europe, as again in the epoch of the Marches, is Gwyn Williams's basic perspective, on a region. It is a perspective that can be shared by all those who in loyalty to their own actual people refuse to assimilate to simple and romantic national traditions.

The possible reservation? That we are invited to agree that we are "now nothing but a naked people under an acid rain." The book's condition being offered, indeed worked at, but the strength of this book, and other difficult but real kinds of strength, are evidence that it is being refused and can be surpassed.



Brett in 1970, aged 86

Getting beyond tragedy

Emma Tennant on the lives of two New Women

BRETT — or The Brett, as she was sippingly called by Frieda Lawrence — was a deaf, mousy, mixed-up girl, famously in love first with John Middleton Murry, whose most tempting offer to her late in life was that if he was unable to find a prostitute and his wife continued to be ill, then she could come and look after him. Second was P. H. Lawrence, by whom Brett was as blighted as by the poet sampled in the mountains of New Mexico where she and the great writer and his wife enjoyed, if that is the word for it, a ménage à quatre: "Lorenzo," Frieda, Brett and Toby her ear-trumpet.

In *Ravello*, on one of the mystic wanderings undertaken to find the blood that beats beneath the rock, Lawrence went into Brett's room, lay in her bed, but walked out after a few minutes, saying her pulses were wrong. For Brett, Artists and Intellectuals were hard to please, as was discovered by many of the contemporary Popular Belles.

Nevertheless, Brett's life story emerges as a triumph as does that of Valentine Ackland, the unconfident, Lesbian poet friend and lover of Sylvia Townsend Warner. Both women suffered from amiable hand-icaps: to be a woman and an artist in the great age of uncertainty, when from a blazing bustle and a head of hair like a hedge pinned and plaited in a daily turreted, the New Woman rose like a valiant, ston-cropped, trousered, thin. But how people laughed! And both came from a "comfortable" background, which in the case of

Brett: From Bloomsbury to New Mexico, by Sean Hignett (Hodder, £14.95). For Sylvia: An Honest Account, by Valentine Ackland (Chatto, £8.95).

Brett, daughter of Lord and Lady Esher, earned her contempt at the Slade and a struggle in life to which she proved herself more than equal, setting indigent painter friends up in her parents' house and complaining loudly when her parents complained.

All the same, these backgrounds, though obviously not to be compared in horror with the terrible conditions of working-class women, were and are yet to receive the full scrutiny of the anthropologist's eye. We're all so used to reading about it: the cruel, eating father, the dispossessed mother, the child on being asked out is simply asked not to pass too much of the stuff to her charges; the extraordinary coldness of the parents, as if the Dampers, in those days still employed in the flues between suburban kitchen and nursery floor, were applied emotionally as well, making for a numb, malformed offspring.

Then there's the upper-class child-molester too: in the land of Peter Pan and Alice, where children were seduced and seduced, lectured simultaneously, most of the damage was done before it was time to leave the nursery, put up the hair, go to the ball.

In Brett's case — and we are provided with a spine-chilling picture — the touch-up was

"Loulou" Harcourt, a friend of Lord Esher, and, as Brett was to discover in one of those throwings-together that make one suspect some hidden pattern in life one will never be able to detect, the assaulter of Edward James as well: he of the great collection of Surrealist pictures, and settler for a time in New Mexico a cote de chez Brett.

From these ghastly ashes, then, rose a painter of talent, wit and distinction. After years which had to contain worship of Lady Ottoline, mystical guilty communion with the ghost of Katherine Mansfield, tense tequilas with the Lawrences, Brett lived on to the age of 94 and died in 1977, photographs showing her happily painting in her cabin which she named The Tower Beyond Tragedy.

Valentine Ackland didn't live so long, yet this testimony of her early years, suffering and drinking to overcome her feelings of inadequacy, her finding of the love of Sylvia Townsend Warner after a frightening first marriage and subsequent life in Dorset, worshipping the Powys family, is by far the strongest of the two books. Over-scrupulous about her failings, acutely perceptive of the world about her, Valentine Ackland is a brilliant writer; and this "confession," written when after 19 years of domestic happiness she decided to live with a new American lover (it didn't work, cleverly Sylvia moved out of their home at Frome Vauchurch, leaving even her cats and books behind and the American was sent back again) is really a short novel of very high standing indeed.

Two American innocents abroad

Julia O'Faolain reviews some of the week's new fiction

HANDSOME is as handsome does, and this in Alison Lurie's books is rarely well. In her latest one a character who seemed good and beautiful turns out to be a monster and monsters reveal hidden grace. This recalls the story of the frog prince, a fable about illusion whose thrust is liberal and optimistic. So, under a sparkle of satire, is Lurie's novel.

Foreign Affairs is about two American academics on sabbatical in London. Vinnie Miner is here to collect play-ground rhymes and it is these rhymes, first sagely which prove the novel its tone. Forty-four-year-old, "small, plain and unassuming," Vinnie, who is an Anglophile and a touch snobbish, piffers when depressed and is followed about by an irresistible woman, Fred, who represents self-love. She values friendship, likes sex, and at the novel's start has never been loved.

By contrast, her colleague Fred is young, self-regarding and irresistible to women. Fred's wife, a photographer — have been estranged since an exhibition in which she put images of his and other anonymous penises on display: a fair return, she feels, for men's long record of exploiting women's bodies. Fred's foreign affair is with Lady Rosemary Radley, an English actress whose behaviour contrasts soothingly with his wife's, just as England contrasts with America which he now considers "large, naive, noisy, crude, etc." Memories of Henry James are invoked and we may think too of Jekyll and



Alison Lurie
Foreign Affairs, by Alison Lurie (Michael Joseph, £8.95).
The Duchess's Diary, by Robin Chapman (Faber, £8.95).
Star Turn, by Nigel Williams (Faber, £9.95).

Hyde when Lady Rosemary's hold on reality turns out to be frail.

Fred, tiring of her meretricious theatricality, will return in the end to his honest photographer and Yankee values triumph in what turns out to be a parody than an up-date of James. Anglophilia and Anglophobia are knowingly mocked and Lurie's wit unleashed most mercilessly on such minor characters as the Voglers, a smug, critical and appallingly true-to-life couple from California.

Vinnie's story is handled with more feeling. She has meanwhile become incongruously entangled with a

sanitary engineer from Tulsa equipped with a see-through mac, cowboy gear and a vocabulary to match: an ugly American whose words do not meet the eye — but then remember the frog prince. Lurie ingeniously extends her novel's scope and resonance by a play of literary echoes, and if the English characters are a shade thin and some of her whimsy smacks of the schoolyard — as when Fred's wife calls the British Museum or BM "the Bowl Movement" — her wit, pace and inventiveness make up generously for this. *Foreign Affairs* fixes with the didactic paradox of fairytale as its handsome writing wins assent for a plain message.

The Duchess's Diary deals with illusion and reality. Lurie, Robin Chapman makes use of the oddly thrilling power of intertextual echo. Maribel, the duchess, is a character from Cervantes's *Don Quixote* and, like the Don, a little out of her mind. Cervantes is to blame. After the success of his novel's first instalment he visited her husband's estate, collaborated on a masque, applauded her in the role of Dulcinea and, by introducing her to the crisis of fiction, enchanted her by his wizardry. She fell in love with him and now that his second book has appeared has convinced herself that she is cruelly and recognisably misrepresented in it.

Meanwhile her husband, considering her mad, has had her locked up and forcibly bled for her body's good and scourged for that of her soul. The text we are reading is her

diary. An astounding piece of prose, it evokes the "reality" from which Cervantes spun part of his novel, anatomises the relations between fiction and folly, and describes her efforts to escape her gossamer. In the process an entire society is convincingly evoked: the heightened perceptions of an acute, imaginative and over-sensitive woman. The new edition of this brief, brilliant book is very welcome.

Star Turn is, as its blurb warns, ambitious. It is also disappointing. This is not for want of invention or intelligence, and what it lacks — life and a feel for character — is notoriously hard to assess with objectivity. I can only report that in the course of its 314 pages was rarely amused at its own whimsy, but with good ideas. It is narrated by the most unreliable of narrators, a mendacious propagandist who, while working for the Ministry of Information during World War Two, has tried to invent or inventively novel attempts to come to terms with these by flicking back through the newsreel of a life in which he and a close Jewish friend, Zak, encounter such figures as Lenin, D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, General Hall, Ramsay MacDonald, Proust and Proust's disreputable chauffeur Albert Freud, Lord Haw Haw and Mosley, for whom Zak acts as a double. Monty Pythonish, page with page work on screen founder on the page and the impact is much like that of a promising movie whose current keeps breaking down.

Malekula, 1926

by Hugh Brody

Footprints on Malekula. A Memoir of Bernard Deacon, by Margaret Gardiner, with a preface by Rodney Needham and an introduction by Peter Gathercole (Salamander Press, £8.95).

ANTHROPOLOGY grew from speculative theories of human evolution into passionate engagement with the rich and complex struggles and extraordinary truths of tribal life. This growth of passion is inseparable from the anthropologist's espousal of "field work," at its best, to one of the most daunting and inspiring of experiences: submergence of oneself in another people's way of life, a readiness to begin at the societal beginnings and, childlike, learn a new language, grapple with the utterly unfamiliar...

How anthropologists have

gone about this task, what they felt about it, and how it changed them, have played very little part in anthropological writings. The experience of some of the greatest extremes of travel (how true and how false) has remained concealed or taken for granted in unpublished notebooks and diaries. And if the experience itself is hidden, even more so is the intricate relationship between the personal and social, the individual and the collective, that what most anthropologists do choose to write about.

In 1926 Bernard Deacon went to Malekula, an island in the New Hebrides. This was his first field trip as a young anthropologist, fresh from Cambridge. In the weeks before leaving for this work, Deacon discovered that he

was at the very edge of being in love with Margaret Gardiner, who was then a Cambridge undergraduate herself. She was already in love with him.

For the following thirteen months Deacon wrote to Margaret Gardiner, and she has now published these letters, along with her reactions to them, in *Footprints on Malekula*. The letters are full of poignant testimonies to the contradictory feelings by which Deacon was engulfed: he struggles to understand Malekulan society and his feelings for Margaret but these struggles lead him to every other kind of question. These letters say everything about the excitement and pain of fieldwork.

In the last two things do become clear: Deacon's extraordinary intellectual breadth (and this far beyond his promise as a brilliantly successful Cambridge stu-

dent), and his resolve to share his life with Margaret Gardiner. But as he was waiting for the steamer on which he would leave the New Hebrides, Deacon died of black fever. He was twenty-four. *Footprints on Malekula* creates a terrible sense of possibilities, in work and in love.

Margaret Gardiner ends the book with a description of her visit to Deacon's grave on Malekula. Like the rest of the book, this final chapter avoids pathos, is brief, and is full of strength. It has passages of new anthropology, giving a sense of Malekulans today (Deacon and others had supposed the people would simply die out, and could well have been longer, but he was wrong). It left me reeling, wanting far, far more — both of Deacon's letters and of Gardiner's reactions to them at the time.

Of art and showbiz

The Oxford Companion to American Theatre, by Gerald Boardman (Oxford, £35).

COMPULSIVE dipsper, theatre buffs and critics will get boundless pleasure out of this fat, compendious volume with its 3,000 entries. In spite of its title, it shows a strong bias towards Broadway rather than Off-Broadway or the regions. What makes it valuable are its plot summaries and pointed comments on just about every play ever achieved a commercial run in New York.

Sometimes the focus on popularity rather than aesthetic quality leads to odd distortions: a forgotten piece of trivia like *Any Wednesday*, a 1964 comedy about a tax-deductible mistress, gets more space than Mamet's *American Buffalo* or Lanford Wilson's *The Fifth of July* (a play that should be done here). But the book's tawdry of

period kitsch produces some surprising omissions.

But the book manages to combine sound critical comment ("Agnes de Mille's work tended to be less razor-sharp than that of her contemporaries, less humor-filled than Robbins'") with a fascinating picture of the volatile American stage. Interesting to note that there were far more Shakespearean revivals around the turn of the century.

Fact-fanciers will be keen to know that Abie's Irish Rose was kept going with the help of gangster-money, that P. T. Barnum used to promote his circus by having a man in Oriental costume plough a field with an elephant, that W. C. Fields regularly performed a dentist-skit in which he took a shotgun to a bird flying out of a patient's beard and that David Merrick published *Look Back in Anger* by putting a woman to climb on stage and slap an actor.

Michael Billington

Matthew Coady's



DOCK BRIEFS

WITH Death at Charity's Point (Crime Club, £7.50) William G. Tappley evokes that confident, almost blasphemous, wit which he revelled in fooling their readers. He starts with a straightforward question: did a dollar-rich matriarch's teacher son turn himself from a class top or was he thrown? The family lawyer's search for the truth, through a posh prep school and the embers of collegiate America's radical break-out, follows a stereotyped path but does it with verve. And it provides a trip through the mystery story maze which sets a stiff standard for the class of 1985. The book has already won a US prize and in Attorney General Coyne a new, engaging and clearly durable series hero emerges fully fledged from Mr Tappley's typewriter.

Seven Steps to Treason, by Michael Landau (Hodder, £8.95) — Links events in Vietnam with planning of secret ops in present day Vienna. KGB puts screws on British diplomat by kidnapping his daughter. Smacks of Cold War soap opera. Hard to "turn off" though.

Patterns in the Dust, by Grant-Adamson (Faber, £8.95) — Cossip column hackette confronts murder in sort of village Dame Agatha loved. Lots of complications under placid bourgeois surface. Bit short on bravura but a promising starter.

Out of the Blackout, by Robert Barrett (Crime Club, £7.50) — Hero, dispossessed of his identity in wartime evacuation, digs for his roots in haunts of latter-day Fascists. Hypnotic, twist but arm of coincidence is wrangled out of its socket.

Wycliffe and the Fen Jacks, by W. J. Borley (Gollancz, £7.95) — The poison dart strikes again! Eponymous hero in case of priapic novel: under death threat. Combines sober face of police procedural with duty improbability and against the odds, brings it off.

Educated in Marxism

V. G. Kiernan on Stalinism and anti-communism

"AND none so poor to do him reverence," said Mark Antony over the corpse of Caesar as a friend of Stalin if he had one, might say of him since Khrushchev's "secret speech" three years after the dictator's death.

The speech is one of the scores of texts in Tariq Ali's illuminating collection; they present a range of points of view, at generous length, adding up to well over 500 pages. They are concerned with politics rather than economics, and a thoughtful introduction reminds us that while Stalinism meant political regression it was accompanied by expended production and a strengthening of the social gains of the revolution. Among the observers brought together to give their judgments on the Soviet Union are Trotsky, Deutscher, and Mandel.

Another group of studies is concerned with five countries of eastern Europe. The most topical of these, by Oliver MacDonald on Poland, the rise and fall of Solidarity, stands out. Here too there is stress on a background of achievement and a thoughtful introduction reminds us that while Stalinism meant political regression it was accompanied by expended production and a strengthening of the social gains of the revolution.

Polish "workers" were making a "genuinely heroic collective effort to find a way to add democracy to socialism. It founded on the heterogeneous membership of the movement, and lack of political direction."

Problems of a different sort are raised by three studies of Asian countries, India, China and Vietnam, where Communist tasks were complicated by struggles for national freedom. In the Indian case there was failure to fuse the two things.

Fundamentally the reason must be that the Far East was ripe for radical change: India was not; but Moscow

The Stalinist Legacy. Its Impact on Twentieth Century World Politics, ed. Tariq Ali (Penguin, £4.95).

The Socialist Register 1984, ed. Ralph Miliband, John Saville, Marcel Liebman (Merlin Press, £12.50, paper £5.50).

guidance was often as unhelpful as it is depicted here, and helped to inspire a series of follies and foundering Indian Communist, one of them — K Damodaran — told Tariq Ali in an interview in 1974, "we're not seriously educated in Marxism," and hence depended for ideas on the "party elders," themselves dependent on Moscow. Two sections of the volume somewhat apart from the rest are about scientific issues such as the Lysoenko controversy, and Solzhenitsyn. Daniel Singer cuts out lucidly the disharmony between the novelist's graphic description of real evils, and the wildly unreal and reactionary ideology which he had him "a godsend for the conservatives of the Western world."

Tariq Ali's witnesses criticise the worst aspects of communism from mainly socialist positions; the Socialist Register, focused this year, its 21st — on a single theme, provides a complementary investigation of anti-communist propaganda from the right wing. This has come to play a large part everywhere in conservative thinking or talking and presents, as Miliband and Liebman say in their opening remarks, "a highly distorted picture."

The editors have assembled a fittingly international team of contributors, with Americans, Canadians, and Europeans. Among these last is Francois Houtart, of the

More or less

by Peter Vansittart

Thomas More, by Richard Marius (Dent, £16.95).

"A RENAISSANCE man acquainted with a wide range of knowledge, but he believed that a few great ideas gave meaning to life. They happened to be thoroughly medieval ideas and when they were thrust into the modern world, he could and did descend into despair, hatred and murderous rage. A devoted and generous friend, he could also be an ugly and implacable enemy — complex, haunted and not altogether admirable."

Until recently, More was romanticised by a reputation for genial humour, courage, humanity and concern for the poor. The greatest storyteller between Chaucer and Shakespeare. Yet the humour could be tart, scatological, hysterical, his courage absent almost to the end, his concern for the poor and justice scarcely pronounced. Politically, he was an ineffective time-server, praising Henry VIII at Caesar's expense for some paltry military successes in France. He mocked the heretics he burned and few advertised their humility more ostentatiously.

Dr Marius, with implicit warning against judging our values present not a saint but an ironic, sometimes baffling play-actor, with conflicts seething beneath external calm. His sensuality, struggling against asceticism, working with the devil of death which he finally overcame with never-forgotten effect. "It may be said that he did not die for what he believed but for what he wanted to believe. Marius indeed speculates whether his intolerant polemics concealed atheistical murmuring, more common in the hooligan sixteenth century than is sometimes admitted."

Whatever his secrets, More always subordinated individual rights, even elementary justice, to the larger good, seeing centralised authority, work discipline as essential ramparts against sin and social and spiritual chaos. The stake was thus "lawful, necessary, and well done."

Marius's own passing opinions can be disputable. "Sailors are not customarily imaginative men." "The English people have been notoriously uninterested in the virtues of the defeated. Surely absurd. The White Rose League will jib at his praise of More's Richard III. But, never claiming to fully explain More, he offers a plausible, full length study of a very peculiar man, a farmer and terror whose own flawed charm and worried will still persist. A man More wrote, can lose his head and come to no harm."

Gnome guard

by Dennis Barker

The Swiss Army (La Place de la Concorde Suisse), by John McPhee (Faber, £8.95).

NEVER knew there was a Swiss Army? Understandable. Received wisdom is that Switzerland has avoided two world wars and will avoid a third because of the surrounding mountains and a complete lack of any military teeth which might aggravate any nearby power. It is true about the mountains, not about the rest.

The truth, as John McPhee well establishes in *The Swiss Army*, is diametrically opposite. Switzerland has what is

called The Porcupine Principle: attack no one, but prepare to make life hell for anyone who attacks you. It has a script army four times the size of the British Army. Its Alps are covered in airstrips from which attacks could be repelled. Its bridges and passes are both mined and constantly covered by enormous guns and missiles that could wipe out any invader. Military headquarters are in bomb-proof mountains. McPhee is a New Yorker writer. That is to say, he is a style-conscious wordsmith, given to staccato sentences and a rhetorical incontinence of place and other proper

names. This approach permits work better in a short piece than in a book, even a short one based on personal encounters rendered down to an impressionistic sketch pad.

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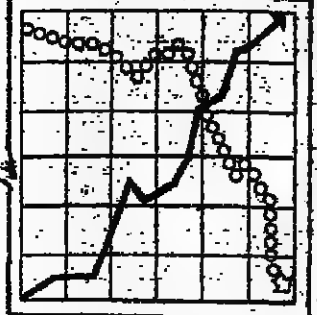
(Black letters please)

Shares hit by reports of fall in price of oil

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FINANCIAL GUARDIAN

Blunt axe approach is no longer credible



ECONOMICS

Christopher Huhne

PIGS MAY fly. Mr Nigel Lawson may emerge from the dark portals of Treasury chambers to hand out lollipops to passing school children. Mrs Thatcher may develop a sense of humour. All these things are more likely than the prospect of the Government actually meeting the expenditure plans it has laid before Parliament this week.

A philosophy tutor once tried to explain to me why the fact that the sun had risen every morning for as long as anyone could remember did not mean that it would rise tomorrow. But, as the economists say, it is nevertheless a fair bet.

For the same reason, it is a fair bet that the rise in public spending after allowing for inflation, not going to stop between now and the time that the Chancellor intends to hand out a cumulative £10 billion in tax cuts before the next election.

When Mr Lawson was a thriving young Treasury Minister, trying to make a reputation by delivering speeches in Zurich without the approval of the Chancellor, he used to enjoy pointing to a "porcupine chart" which showed how optimistic previous governments had been about growth when they came to set their spending plans. The graph shows a revised version of the "porcupine chart" which shows how optimistic Mr Lawson's government has been about its cash plans for public spending.

The chart is expressed in cash, because the Treasury now plans public spending in cash rather than in the pounds of one particular year, then updates to allow for price changes since that time. But let us be even

fairer to the Government and work out what has really happened to public spending in real terms — after allowing for the general rise in prices through the economy, although of course not allowing for the particular rise in the costs of public spending.

Even the Government's figures show that the planning total is expected to have increased in real terms by 9.5 per cent between 1978-9 and this financial year, 1984-5. The official figures, though, deduct from the planning total the sales of any public assets in that year, on the dubious grounds that such sales are negative public spending rather than a revenue source like any other. If the real rise is 11.3 per cent.

Just how likely the Government is to meet its plans is revealed by the startling contrast between the past and present expectations. The average real increase in the (asset sales adjusted) planning total since 1978-9 has been 1.8 per cent a year.

Indeed, there was not a single year when the Government managed to reduce public spending in real terms. Yet the said planning total is now expected to fall by 1 per cent next year, 0.7 per cent in 1986-7 and to rise by only 0.5 per cent in 1987-8. And there is assuming that the entire contingency reserve is spent in each case — so there isn't much leeway.

How is it that public spending has gone on rising, when all you read in the newspapers (especially the Guardian) is about cuts? A small part of the answer is that the Government plans cuts, but gets rises. It is very good at sticking to its planning totals for future years. It is not so good at sticking to them in the year in question.

A more important part of the answer is that most programmes have in fact been cut back rather than made for a small number of big ticket growth items like social security, law and order and defence (though even these last two are to fall in real terms over the planning period ahead).

Another reason is that even a real growth in some programmes — notably health and social security — is not necessarily enough to keep up with the growing demands of increasing numbers of people aged 65 and over and old age pensioners, the

standard of service or benefit per head has, can, and probably will fall.

For exactly these reasons, the process of trying to meet the Treasury's targets — and even of missing them — is going to be extremely painful to a lot of people dependent on the public sector, notably teachers, construction workers, health service ancillaries, the sick who will have to pay higher prescription charges, and anyone who has to pay a gas, electricity or water bill.

A lot of spending cuts are in fact — and look as if they are planned to be — backdoor tax increases: what we pay with one hand we are to get back in income tax cuts later (if we are lucky enough to be in work) on the idiotic assumption that what motivates us is not the purchasing power of our earnings but merely the cash left in the pay packet after direct taxes.

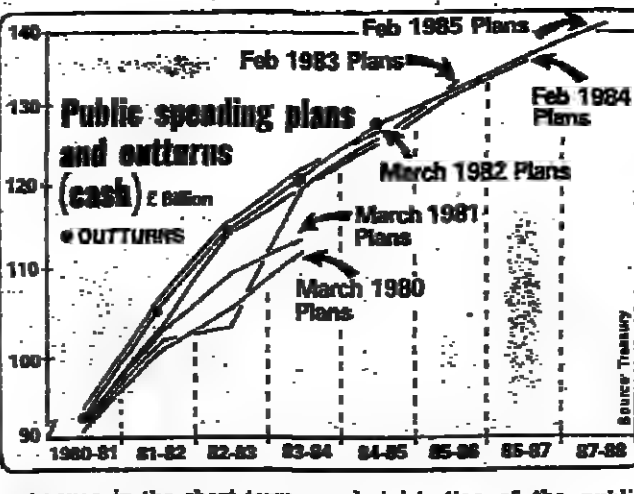
Evidently, the Chancellor has precious little faith in British common sense if he really believes that this sort of tax cut is going to improve incentives.

The implications of the spending course which the Chancellor has charted for himself — or anything near it — are admirably spelt out in the National Institute discussion paper by Michael Levitt and Michael Joyce. Their scenario A, which assumes no change in total spending through to 1989-4, is uncannily similar to government plans. It certainly allows scope for tax cuts as spreading falls as a proportion of growing national income, but it also implies real political and social trouble.

For a start, the gap between earnings for those in work and social security benefits for those out of work and pensioners increases steadily as benefits rise only in line with prices. So much for one nation Toryism.

Secondly, the gap between private and public sector earnings could widen by as much as 17 per cent, when our public sector workers are already paid relatively less than in other European countries. This implies a substantial political and economic risk, since it was after the last such compression of public earnings that wages exploded in 1979-80.

The political risks, indeed, go wider, for the Chancellor's plans, in their best, alienate both wings of his



party even in the short term. Public investment is again sharply cut, outraging the "Wets". But defence spending and order also come under the axe for the first time, which is unlikely to please the Empire loyalist wing which the Prime Minister has so far been able to add to her "economists" to form her "right wing majority".

Perhaps even more important is the impression which will be created outside Parliament. As Sir Keith Joseph's attempt to axe student grants for the well-heeled shows — or indeed the clackback in BBC world service spending to protect the aid budget — the Government can rapidly acquire a reputation for trifling, petty and mean-minded savings which in the long term can do real damage to its public standing.

It is indicative, for example, that the latest Gallup poll in the Daily Telegraph showed a substantial increase in the number of people who believe that the Conservatives look after the interests of the rich, not ordinary people (64 per cent now agree) and don't care what hardships their policies cause (similarly 64 per cent agree).

It is not at all clear that even the minority of people who can guarantee the Conservatives an election victory under the current system really want their children's education and their health care to deteriorate for the sake of income tax cuts.

In short, we are getting to the end of the road which began with the IMF-imposed spending cuts under the last Labour government. The blunt axe approach to spending is no longer likely to work, however much disguised it may be by rhetoric about greater efficiency. The rhetoric merely gives genuine efficiency savings a bad name.

If the Chancellor and his bewildered Chief Secretary are to make headway on public spending, they will have to think far more radically about improving the

Inflationary pressure is set to burst through



INVESTMENT

Robin Stoddart

HALF a century of continuous inflation might almost have come to an end last year. That is what share markets worldwide have been celebrating. The slight dip in living costs in December helped to keep Britain from sticking out like a sore thumb among competing industrial nations who have got price increases back down to negligible proportions. But they stand to gain from lower oil prices.

The return well below 5 per cent inflation in Britain is more statistical than real. It has been underlined by soaring tea prices and the fall in the pound. The inflation in every other industrialised country, in that way costs are kept down and the exchange rate reasonably stable.

There is no longer any doubt about the durability of the economic revival in the United States, which underwrites the recovery in most countries with strong export trade. President Reagan's luck and economic successes could continue for most of his second term in office. All that is needed is a fall in the dollar, which could be brought about by lower interest rates with further beneficial effect all around.

If ever the advantages of going into debt were manifest, they are in the US, but the aversion to raising taxes to balance the budget now means that inflation is not so far below the surface on the other side of the Atlantic either. The possibility that defence spending could be cut back to allow more money to be spent on other things is not enough to keep the pressure off indefinitely. At the same time, a fall in oil prices in the spring could

give President Reagan still further cause for celebration. Monetarist gloomsters are unlikely to raise much of a squeak during this period and after failing to appreciate the strength of pre-Christmas demand and that US economic growth was consequently still running at an annual rate of nearly 4 per cent in the last quarter, most economic forecasters there may have to lie low for a while. Occasional predictions of an increase in dollar interest rates to cool growth and the rise in bank lending are still surfacing but they can probably continue to be dismissed.

In the circumstances, more investor attention is bound to be focused on US Treasury bonds offering real returns of nearly 9 per cent above the 2.4 per cent US inflation rate. While that is two points more than London gilts provide, and tax factors widen the differential still further, for many buyers there is a good chance of a further widespread international advance in stock market prices, though it would have to be accompanied by further falls in interest rates.

Meanwhile, a flattening of the yield curve on United Kingdom gilts, more particularly a rise in the prices of medium-dated stocks offering yields not far short of 12 per cent, is likely. Treasury funding has switched longer, after a lengthy hiatus. Although something of an admission of defeat, this is only commonsense when the interest cost is almost a point lower.

For safety in an uncertain world, however, the attraction of index-linked Treasury stocks is still very clear. Now that the low December index figure is known and out of the way, buyers of these issues can be sure of another run up in the retail price index.

The zoom through the 1,000 mark on the old Financial Times index, with gains in share prices sometimes reaching a quarter in a day for issues that have long been regarded as unexciting and absolutely safe, makes basic saving look quite mundane, even at current high interest returns. Although international and exchange-rate factors, as well as the massive transfer of income back to corporate, private-sector profit, provide strong justification for the long-running bull market, all such things not only come to an end, but are, in part, reversed.

THE DAY IN POLITICS

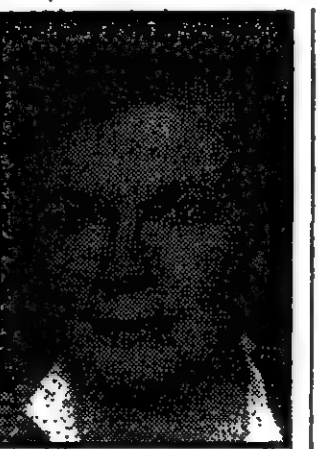
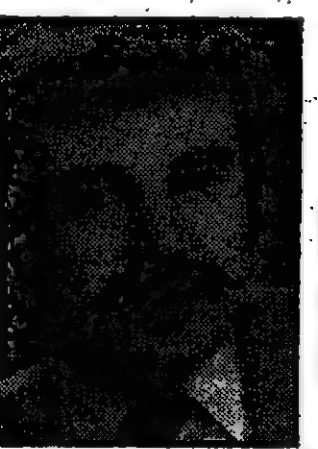
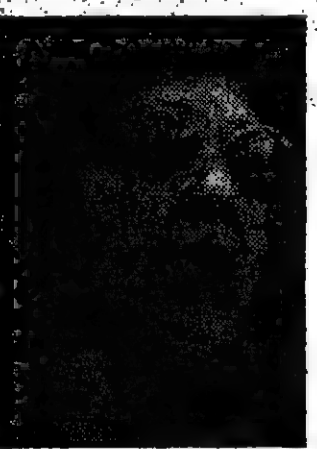
Labour's short list

By Martin Linton

THE NEXT general secretary of the Labour Party will be chosen next week from a shortlist of seven candidates that was approved by the National Executive Committee yesterday.

The final choice is likely to be between Mr Larry Whitty, research officer at the General and Municipal Workers' Union, Mrs Joyce Gould, the Labour Party's assistant national agent, and Mrs Helen Liddell, the party's Scottish Secretary.

Mr Whitty, aged 41, will be the clear front runner, enjoying the support of Mr Neil Kinnock, the party's leader, and probably a number of trade union votes, because



of his background in the unions, both at the TUC and as head of research for Mr Kinnock's campaign.

But he may be quite closely challenged by Mrs Liddell, aged 34, the party's senior officer in Scotland, who is a former journalist and has worked for the Scottish TUC. She is joined on the shortlist by Mr Jimmy

Allison, the Scottish organiser of the party who is one of the party's most experienced agents.

Mrs Gould, aged 52, is the party's campaign officer and chief women's officer as well as being assistant national agent and the only internal candidate from the party headquarters.

The head of the employ-

ment and economics division of the London Borough of Lewisham, Mr Sahall Ince, aged 47, is also on the shortlist, while Mr Harold Tinworth, aged 36, head of corporate planning at the London Borough of Haringey, and Mr Roger Ward, aged 37, a researcher and official of the white collar union, ASTMS.

'Rally to fund campaign'

By Martin Linton

The Labour Party is being urged to play a bigger role in the campaign for a "yes" vote in the trade union ballots on political funds because of their vital importance to the party's finances.

The campaign organised by the trade unions will concentrate on the constitutional issues of the freedom of trade unions to take political action and their right to be represented in Parliament while playing down the issue of affiliation to the Labour Party.

In a letter to the general secretary of the Labour Party yesterday, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, a left-wing pressure group, calls on the party to take a far more vigorous part in the campaign.

It points out that not only union interests are at stake. "The very viability of the Labour Party is threatened by the ballots and any loss of union affiliations could be extremely serious," it says.

The committee appoints an officer to co-ordinate the campaign, allocate a budget, organise day schools, use party political broadcasts on television and use all the techniques of elections in the campaign, even involving sympathetic show business stars, it says.

The ballots will be held between April and March of next year and the LCC argues that they can be turned to the Labour Party's advantage to rebuild the party's links with unions at local level, and to use them as a springboard for the next general election.

"The political funds campaign should be used as part of the long haul to the next election," it says. "It gives us an opportunity to argue for Labour at the workplace level in a way that the party has never done before."

But it would be disastrous if the Labour Party intervened in the campaign in a way that was "insensitive or counter-productive."

Stockton urges policy switch in TV debut

THE ECONOMY

By Colin Brown

The Earl of Stockton urged the Government last night, in the first televised debate from the House of Lords, to reject its policies to reduce unemployment.

Lord Stockton was warmly cheered by Opposition peers when he called on Government to adopt the reflationary policies of the United States.

"Let us not be the slowest ship in the convoy. We must be the leader — or at any rate, make an attempt to regain the leadership we have had for so long," he said.

"The next generation will not be for me but for my successors to make the decision whether we just slowly, rationally sink not perhaps drastically, tragically, but go slowly down like a great ship; or should we make a new departure, united effort putting party aside — there must be parties of course — but there can be co-operation, even national government."

"Let us do the latter and then historians of the future will not describe the end of this century as the beginning of the decline and fall of Britain but as the beginning of a new and glorious renaissance."

Lord Stockton, the former Conservative Prime Minister, Mr Harold Macmillan, spoke in support of a Labour backbench scene which had been painted by the Arts Minister.

Both Lord Cledwyn, from the Opposition front bench and Baroness Sear from the SDP/Liberal Alliance parties, attacked the "dogma" of the Government's economic policies. Lord Cledwyn said he did not recognise the euphoric scene which had been painted by the Arts Minister.

Lord Stockton said that four years ago the "rather depressing" reign of President Carter came to an end. They were in a similar position to Britain — unemployment was very high (1 in 8) and the economy was falling.

"And then President Reagan



Post office closures will hit elderly

COMMONS DEBATE

By Alan Travis

THE closure of 78 main post offices and of 800 sub-post offices in the Government's planned shake-up of the service will lead to serious social harm and extra travelling costs for the elderly, the disabled and the parents of small children, Mr John Smith, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, said yesterday.

He was speaking in the Commons in an Opposition motion, which called upon the Government to moderate its new financial targets for the Post Office so that "an extensive and socially responsible network of post offices was maintained."

Mr Geoffrey Pattie, the Trade and Industry Minister, replying for the Government,

said that the contemplated programme of closures would still leave the largest retail network in the country with 1,007 main post offices and 21,000 sub-post offices. He said only 5 per cent were being closed and he denied that the programme would cause serious social harm.

Mr Smith said that the post office network formed one of the country's most important services, distributing pensions, social security and child and other benefits where ease of access was crucial.

"The heart of this debate is the balancing of social and commercial responsibilities. The Government's financial policies towards the post offices have become so rigorous in enforcing a narrow kind of commercialism that the social responsibility has become subordinate."

He said he could not

understand the government's financial demands when the Post Office was heading for a profit of £110 million this year and its customer services alone were heading for a profit of around £12 million.

"We are not asking the Government for some outrageous increase in public expenditure but only for a moderate increase in the targets for the counter services placed in the Post Office."

Mr Pattie claimed that Labour had closed more post offices in its last five years of government than the Conservative Government since 1979.

He said that the new financial arrangements were needed for greater efficiency and they would not be a major mark-up in the post office's profits.

All the closures contemplated were in urban areas, none were in rural areas.

"In those urban areas there are many other shops or meeting points that the local community can regard as some kind of social meeting place. This programme does not amount to serious social harm," he said, adding that the network would still be effective.

Certain inner city areas had seen a substantial reduction in their population but had not had a proportionate reduction in their post offices while new ones had opened in areas of expanding population.

Mr Pattie said there were 2,000 urban post offices which were unprofitable.

Before the Commons debate, Conservative MPs protested that the closure of the House of Commons' own post office as part of a London-wide protest by Post Office workers, had interfered with the work of MPs.

positive" decisions on the setting up of community radio as quickly as possible, and visualised a number of experimental stations, with others coming on the air at frequencies became available.

Mr Brittan, in a written answer to a parliamentary question from Mr Robert Hayward (C. Kingswood) gave no date for the forecast experiments but said he would make a further statement "before too long."

Mr Brittan said that community radio would be something different from the local radio provided by the BBC and independent local radio.

MP rebuffed

The Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, yesterday dismissed a Labour MP's suggestion to cut costs by sending overseas Foreign Office officials' children to state instead of public schools.

The idea, put forward at question time by Mr Dale Campbell-Savours (Workington), was suggested for "narrow class reasons," said Sir Geoffrey.

Lord Cledwyn called for an independent inquiry into the implications for the Government's claim that Britain could create employment in service industries to replace the lost jobs in manufacturing.

Calling for more money to be spent on capital schemes instead of tax cuts Lord Cledwyn said that with three million unemployed "it would be at best foolish and at worst wicked to hand over money in the budget."

Lord Beswick said that the Government would not answer the call for national unity by concentrating Whitehall propaganda against the miners. If there was a choice between tax cuts and productive employment, "We should say firmly we choose the latter."

Howe attacks MEP inquiry on police

The inquiry, by a committee of the Strasbourg, was attacked by Mr Teddy Taylor (C. Southend E.). He urged Sir Geoffrey to "make it abundantly clear that the Government will provide no official cooperation in hands of so-called Euro-MPs descending on this country to investigate matters of purely domestic interest like the conduct of the police in the miners' strike."

ETHIOPIA

Cholera appeal

The Government was urged in the Commons yesterday by the SDP Leader, Dr David Owen, to send medical teams to Ethiopia to combat the cholera outbreak ravaging refugee camps.

He told Foreign Office Minister of State, Mr Malcolm

BROADCASTING

Community radio

By Dennis Barker

The Home Secretary, Mr Leon Brittan, yesterday promised to reach "practical and

Community radio

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Community radio

By Dennis Barker

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PIT STRIKE

Britain will refuse to cooperate with the European Parliament's controversial inquiry into the policing of the pits dispute, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, confirmed yesterday.

10 0 partner
News; M
Merrill

by June Sutton.
10 45 An Act of Worship.
11 0 News; Jacqueline Du Pre. A
11 45 portrait for her 40th birthday.
12 0 Passing Trades? Life as a bus
12 27 conductor.
12 27 Humour in Music: Gerard Hoff-
1 0 nang.
1 40 The World at One: News.
2 0 The Archers.
2 0 News; Woman's Hour talks to
Julia Hume—freelance rat-
catcher.
2 30 News; Mary Taylor

4 10 Through the Telephones. Comedy thriller by John Fletcher. Skit-dungery at the Computer Centre. News; Enquire Within.

4 10 Book shelf.

4 40 Story Time: A Country Doctor's Notebook, by Mikhail Bulgakov (3).

- 6 PM. News Magazine
- 7 The Six O'Clock News
- 8 My Word! Panel game
- 9 News; The Archers
- 10 Any Answers?
- 11 International Assignment
- 12 Plato to NATO. Brian Redhead's course on political thought 2
- 13 Hobbes and Locke
- 14 Profile
- 15 Does He Take Sugar? Magazine for the disabled
- 16 John Ebdon in the Sound Archives
- 17 Magazine. The T's Drink

Philip Brady talks to Gunter Grass, author of the influential novel on the decline and fall of the Third Reich and to the director of the film, and others influenced by it.

10 15 A Book at Bedtime: Second from Last in the Sack Race, by David Nobbs (4).

10 30 The World Tonight.

11 15 The Financial World Tonight.

11 30 Today in Parliament.

12 0 News; weather; Shipping.

12 15 2.5.73, 48 am. 11.12.72. School

5:55 pm Listening Corner 2:55-3
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1 10 am Schools Night-time Broadcas-
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Four Hours 7 30 Short Takes 7 45
Network Link 8 0 News 8 5 Reflections
12 15 Country News 6 30m 7 30m 9 30m
Fol 8 0 News 9 5 British Press Review
9 15 The World Today 9 30 Finance
News 9 40 Look Ahead 9 45 Monitors
10 15 The World Today 10 30 Finance
11 0 News 11 30 Clayton's Zodiac 11 0 News
11 5 News about Britain 11 15 News

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|---------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| On Twenty | 12.45 Sports Roundup | 1.30 |
| News | 12.45 Four Hours | 1.30 |
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Box Office 6596 63910

NCCL says files are kept on friends of fraud suspects

Fowler pledges inquiry over 'secret dossiers' on claimants

By David Hencke, Social Services Correspondent

An investigation into allegations that the Department of Health is keeping criminal records, police photographs, vehicle licence numbers and names and addresses of friends of claimants who might be suspected of fraud has been promised by Mr Norman Fowler, the Social Services Secretary.

The allegations have been made by the National Council of Civil Liberties after the acquisition of internal files held by a regional social security directorate of the department.

The information was passed to the NCCL by a civil servant who alleges that the files are being compiled as part of routine fraud inquiries which involve asking local police forces to "travel through lists of hundreds of claimants who might be suspected of committing fraud."

The civil servant alleges that in return, social security staff are keeping an eye on claimants and their friends and are logging information on people who may not even be claiming social security.

A confidential file on one claimant seen by the Guardian shows a standard card which records the claimant's national insurance and criminal record numbers.

The card gives a description of the claimant, covering his height, build, hair, accent, complexion, and distinguishing features, including medical information. A separate section gives details of offences he has committed and remedies he has used.

Another section covers his "associates," giving details of a woman with whom he was cohabiting and recording offences she committed up to 14 years ago.

Attached to the card were three photographs of the claimant. On the back of the photographs is the name of a constabulary which has been partly "whited out."

Mr Larry Gostin, general secretary of the National Council of Civil Liberties, said yesterday: "We wrote to Mr Fowler telling him in general terms what we had been told. We have now received a reply saying he is prepared to investigate it and wants sight of the document and the name of our source."

"I have written back to him

today, saying we welcome that he is prepared to investigate it but we are seeking assurances to protect our source from prosecution under the Official Secrets Act before we pass on any details or documents."

The NCCL believed that "a web of information" on claimants were being made available using the police computer and the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Centre, he said.

"The people at risk are the most vulnerable and poorest in our society, and they will have no knowledge that this information is being made available about them."

"It also leaves the situation open for random checks on claimants during general fraud operations to see if any of them have a criminal record."

"We feel that if the Department of Health need this information they should have to seek permission from a High Court judge for a warrant so that they have responsible evidence that a major fraud may have been committed."

Mr Michael Mescher, Labour's social services spokesman, who was contacted by the NCCL, last night tabled questions to Mr Fowler seeking details of guidance given in DHSS offices on obtaining criminal records on claimants.

He also wants to know how many claimants may have been denied benefit after details of criminal records were obtained from the department.

The Home Office said that since 1979, the Association of Chief Police Officers has agreed a code of guidance to assist outside organisations with details of criminal records.

The code says: "The circumstances in which this is done are entirely a matter for chief officers to determine in the light of all the factors surrounding each request for such assistance."

"The Association of Chief Police Officers has agreed that the guidelines may also be applied where it is desired to exchange information with other non-police, but still official investigative agencies such as those of the Post Office, Customs and Excise and the Department of Health and Social Security."

The Department of Health confirmed yesterday that it had replied to a letter from the NCCL. "We are now awaiting a reply from NCCL with more information."

Stockton pleads for a glorious future

By Colin Brown, Political Staff

The Earl of Stockton stole the limelight in the first televised debate broadcast live from the House of Lords yesterday by calling for the Government to launch the British economy on "a glorious renaissance."

He warned Mrs Thatcher and her ministers against the futility of the monetarist theories and urged her Government to follow the example of the United States with redemptive policies to reduce unemployment.

The choice facing the country, he said, was that it could lead the way to a glorious renaissance in the economy. This would require co-operation and Lord Stockton mentioned "national government" but this was taken as a tantalising afterthought, rather than a deliberate demand for a coalition.

His speech was delayed by a "constitutional" problem in the public gallery by about 20 supporters of the miners' dispute who held up placards and shouted "Coal not done" before being bundled out. Following an agreement with the broadcasters, the cameras were kept on the Earl and the peers around him.

His unpolished words clearly fell on deaf ears. The Earl of Gowrie, the Arts Minister and Government spokesman on the economy in the Lords, insisted at the opening of the debate that it was only by following the pursuit of growth with falling inflation that jobs could be created.

Lord Gowrie endorsed the view of Lord Stockton in his glittering maiden speech before Christmas that the miners' dispute was "heartbreaking." But, unlike its three predecessors, the government was not being defeated or even deflected by large left-led monopoly trade unions, he added.

From the Opposition front bench Lord Cledwyn urged the Government to seek a negotiated settlement and joined the Labour backbenchers near Lord Besswick in calling for funds for job creation rather than tax cuts in the budget.

Lord Gowrie's defence of the Government was praised by the Earl of Stockton, who promptly proceeded to demolish it by a combination of sparkling wit and a series of "noisy" remarks.

He went on to say that if the Government were to go on as they were, they would go on as they were, and he always receive refugees in

currency. "I am not impressed by that very much."

"Nor was I persuaded by ministers who criticised the American recovery on the grounds that they were spending too much money. How can you have production unless you have got the money to produce?" he demanded.

"I don't believe in the theory of first produce and then borrow the money. That is not what my grandfather did." This was a reference to the relative who launched the family publishing business.

He was greeted with laughter from all sides when he said President Reagan had exiled the theorists but happily for Britain they had been received "with that courtesy with which we always receive refugees" in

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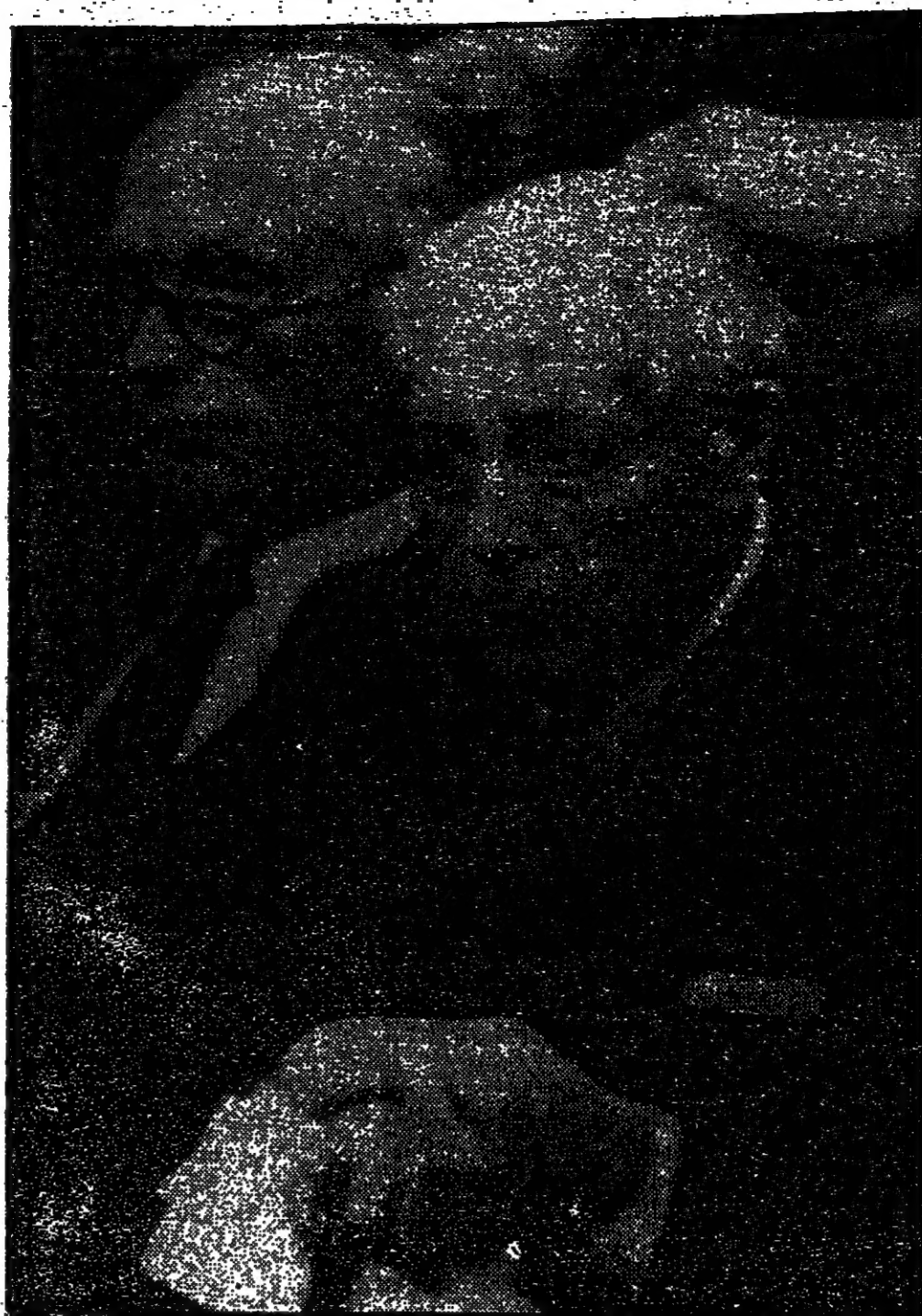
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STEALING THE SHOW: The Earl of Stockton waiting to speak in the first broadcast televised live from the House of Lords, where he urged reflation to reduce unemployment.

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Loop line proposed

Continued from page one

decisions have been taken, Mr Ridley is therefore pressing for a short quick bill to amend the London Regional Transport Act which he piloted through Parliament last year.

The plan is likely to be resisted by several Cabinet colleagues.

The Government's business managers are also concerned about the increasing congestion in the Parliamentary timetable. They will remind Mr Ridley that he is also wanting time for a buses bill, which is likely to provoke some unrest from Tory backbenchers who fear it could damage rural services.

It is understood that Mr Ridley would seek to amend clauses covering the £100 million subsidy which the GLC budgeted to provide for London Transport in 1984/5. In the event, the service needs £20 million less but Mr Ridley wants the £100 million.

He also wants lessening debts worth £20.8 million to be paid off in the present financial year by the GLC.

That is not quite so. They were being permitted to come into ours. The question is whether it was lords leaping up, ladies dropping off, prelates preaching and Lord Diamond and Lady Secar discussing whether to sell the family silver to pay the groceries in our living room.

Oh, I think so. I am rather flattered to think I have family silver.

Report: Page 23.

Heavy fines

A driver about to be arrested for non-payment of £4,000 in motoring fines paid up in pounds coins when police called at his home in Torquay, Devon.

Shadow cabinet shifts stance on strike debate

By James Naughtie and Alan Travis

The shadow cabinet last night shifted its tactics on the miners' strike. It agreed that a Commons debate would be welcome, but decided against demanding time from the Government for a debate next week.

The change of posture has been brought on by a tough Government line against new negotiations this week, and the growing pressure on the Left in the parliamentary party for an early debate.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, now supports a debate, but it is unlikely that he will demand it from the Government in the Commons today.

Instead, Labour's tactics appear to be geared to an emergency debate next week.

They believe that the Speaker, Mr Bernard Weatherill, is likely to respond to pressure from backbenchers to grant time, and the leadership is making it clear that it supports such a move.

The shadow cabinet's change of emphasis came at the end of a day in which the left — particularly MEPs in the Campaign group — stepped up their demands for the Government to provide Commons time to discuss the strike.

Rightwingers joined the left in asking the Speaker to grant an emergency debate.

After a meeting of the Campaign group last night it was clear that the MPs intend to persist with daily protests about the Government's refusal to grant time.

Some leftwingers were again in trouble with the party leaders after about two dozen miners' supporters demonstrated in the gallery of the Lords just before the Earl of Stockton spoke in the unemployment debate on the first day of televised proceedings.

After allegations that the protesters had been given money by leftwing Labour MPs, Michael Cor, the chief whip, said: "I am concerned about the reports I have heard."

"I shall establish the facts as quickly as I can, and talk to the people concerned." It was a serious incident, and should not have occurred.

It is now argued by Mr Kinnock's aides that the Government's refusal to contemplate negotiations between the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mineworkers changes the position dramatically, and ensures that a debate would focus on the need for negotiation and the case for coal, rather than on the difficulties in the Labour movement over the strike.

Only last week Mr Kinnock told his backbenchers that he believed a debate would not help the party or the miners.

At a meeting of Labour's national executive yesterday, there was unanimous support for a strategy of asking the Government to support the miners, and declaring "the total failure of the present government to offer any answer to the desperate plight of millions of British people suffering under fuel poverty."

The Labour national executive committee agreed to attend the party's financial appeal to relieve hardship, and to discuss possible joint rallies with the NUM and the production of a four-page tabloid journal on the strike to go to every household in Britain.

Welsh church leaders yesterday met the Energy Secretary, Mr Peter Walker, in an attempt to find a solution to the miners' strike. They said later that they were disappointed by his response.

Mr Walker said that he had made it clear that he could not support the churchmen's suggestion of an independent inquiry into the coal industry as a way of ending the dispute.

ber national executive has been announced. The South Derbyshire and the Nottinghamshire rightwing Leicestershire area would retain a member on the union's governing body.

Pit delegates in South Derbyshire have already decided to follow the example of Nottinghamshire by introducing a rule change to give the area greater authority from the national executive, although a ballot is planned among the area's 3,000 pitmen to endorse the proposal.

Only 17 miners are still on strike in South Derbyshire and the area will take a final decision on its constitutional position until a national delegate conference next week.

The Nottinghamshire area executive decided yesterday to defer any decision on lifting the national overtime ban introduced before the national strike, and still in force.

They also confirmed that proposed changes in the composition of the union's 25-member

signs that the coal strike is polarising support between the parties with supporters of the miners rallying to Labour and supporters of the Coal Board rallying to the Alliance or the Conservatives.

The Guardian-Marplan index was based on a tightly controlled quota sample of 1,448 adults aged 18 plus in 103 randomly-selected constituencies. Interviewing was conducted face-to-face between January 10 and 14.

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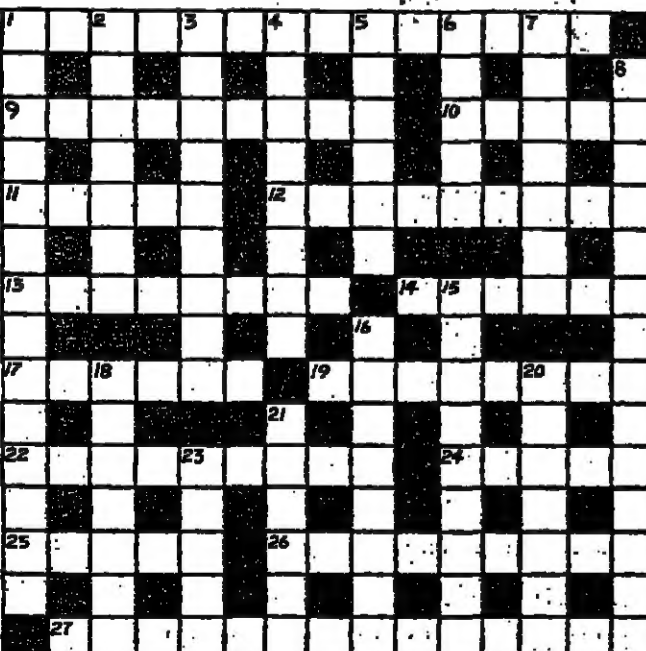
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GUARDIAN CROSSWORD 17,142

ARACARIA



ACROSS
1 Quell disturbance and hatred posed by hesitation — I love diplomacy (4, 3, 4, 3).
5 Floating growth found on river by doctor if first (5, 4).
10 Dog's home perhaps, to sustain (5).
11 Manner of speaking archaically projected (5).
12 Horse that should be looked in the mouth? (5, 4).
13 Mentally free in the road is a bus expected? (5, 4).
14 Over-poetical piece included by the way (6).
17, 19, 22 Make some progress and welcome Tory rule? (4, 2, 3, 5, 9).

DOWN
24, 25 When crossword's beginning to dawn? (5, 5).
26 What follows; what precedes (9).
27 Climb up from low C to high C? (9, 5).

1 Straddle? No way (with-out repeating Roman date) (4, 4, 6).
2 Creatures with all the 6s in a 10 (7).
3 Bit too big for a singer (4, 5).
4 Put life into miserable singer among orientals (5).
5 They are East and West, ending now strength from figures showing high US economic growth.

6 Stunt rider given to analysis, maybe (5, 7).
7 French person's liturgy straining to be historic (8, 5).
15 The naked truth: bachelor umpire is playing (4, 5).
16 Companion-in-morning article, breaking off from left to right? (8).
18 Makes purple as green? (7).
20 Ape the sound of war? (7).
21 Noticed absence of girl journalist (6).
23 Stop filming, that's a pretty girl! (5).

CROSSWORD SOLUTION 17,141
ACROSS
1 QUELL DISTURBANCE AND HATRED POSED BY HESITATION — I LOVE DIPLOMACY (4, 3, 4, 3).
5 FLOATING GROWTH FOUND ON RIVER BY DOCTOR IF FIRST (5, 4).
10 DOG'S HOME PERHAPS, TO SUSTAIN (5).
11 MANNER OF SPEAKING ARCHAI-CALLY PROJECTED (5).
12 HORSE THAT SHOULD BE LOOKED IN THE MOUTH? (5, 4).
13 MENTALLY FREE IN THE ROAD IS A BUS EXPECTED? (5, 4).
14 OVER-POETICAL PIECE INCLUDED BY THE WAY (6).
17, 19, 22 MAKE SOME PROGRESS AND WELCOME TORY RULE? (4, 2, 3, 5, 9).

DOWN
24, 25 WHEN CROSSWORD'S BEGINNING TO DAWN? (5, 5).
26 WHAT FOLLOWS; WHAT PRECEDES (9).
27 CLIMB UP FROM LOW C TO HIGH C? (9, 5).
1 STRADDLE? NO WAY (WITH-OUT REPEATING ROMAN DATE) (4, 4, 6).
2 CREATURES WITH ALL THE 6s IN A 10 (7).
3 BIT TOO BIG FOR A SINGER (4, 5).
4 PUT LIFE INTO MISERABLE SINGER AMONG ORIENTALS (5).
5 THEY ARE EAST AND WEST, ENDING NOW STRENGTH FROM FIGURES SHOWING HIGH US ECONOMIC GROWTH.

6 STUNT RIDER GIVEN TO ANALYSIS, MAYBE (5, 7).
7 FRENCH PERSON'S LITURGY STRAINING TO BE HISTORIC (8, 5).
15 THE NAKED TRUTH: BACHELOR UMPIRE IS PLAYING (4, 5).
16 COMPANION-IN-MORNING ARTICLE, BREAKING OFF FROM LEFT TO RIGHT? (8).
18 MAKES PURPLE AS GREEN? (7).
20 APE THE SOUND OF WAR? (7).
21 NOTICED ABSENCE OF GIRL JOURNALIST (6).
23 STOP FILMING, THAT'S A PRETTY GIRL! (5).

Solution tomorrow

THE WEATHER

Cold and cloudy

THE NW airflow covering much of the UK will moderate as a trough of low pressure moves E into SW districts.

London, SE and SW England: Becoming cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

E Anglia, Midlands, N Wales, Isle of Man: Becoming cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

E and W England, Scotland, Edinburgh and Glasgow: Becoming cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

Channel Islands: Cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

Wales and SW England: Cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

Channel Islands: Cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

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Channel Islands: Cloudy, showers of rain, mainly in the evening, moderate, rain, Max temp 5 to 10 (4 to 10).

AROUND THE WORLD

LONDON-TIME REPORTS

Alaska: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Arctic: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Canada: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Europe: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Africa: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Asia: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Australia: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. New Zealand: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. South America: Fair, cold, -10 to -15. Antarctica: Fair, cold, -10 to -15.

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